

Easy Slow-Cooked Beef Stew

Here's a dump-and-go version of Boeuf Bourguignon that feeds a crowd after a day outdoors without much mothering. You can brown the meat if you have time, but we just tossed it in flour and dumped all the ingredients into a CrockPot before we took off. Nothing fancy, just delicious, low-maintenance sustenance that keeps the wheels turning.

TIME: 30 minutes active time, plus 10 hours cooking time

MAKES: 4 to 6 servings

- 2 1/2 pounds beef stew pieces
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 4 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 large leek, thinly sliced
- 1 pound carrots, peeled and cut into 1" pieces
- 1 pound crimini mushrooms, quartered
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- 2 cups dry red wine
- 2 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 pound fingerling potatoes, cut into 1" chunks (chop just before cooking)
- Hot pepper sauce (such as Cholula or Tabasco), to taste
- Sour cream, to taste

Pat the beef pieces dry, and mix with the flour in a large bowl. Season the beef with salt and pepper on all sides. (If you have time, sear the meat here in a bit of oil over medium-high heat in a heavy-bottomed pan, until nicely browned.) Add the meat to a large slow cooker, along with the onion, garlic, leek, carrots, mushrooms, herbs, wine, and broth, and stir to combine. Cook on low heat, covered, for 10 hours, undisturbed.

Before serving, place the potatoes in a small saucepan and add cold water to cover. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Drain, and add potatoes to stew. Season stew to taste with additional salt and pepper and hot pepper sauce, and serve hot, with a dollop of sour cream, if desired.