



Menu du Jour

21 Nov 2004

Spicy Beef Stew and Seasoned Dumplings (Recipe serves four)

There is probably nothing better than a steaming bowl of chunky beef stew with fluffy dumplings on a cold winter's night. This recipe adds a little zing to the traditional beef stew. If desired, parsnips, turnips, or any other root vegetables could be added to the stew.

Spicy Beef Stew and Seasoned Dumplings

3 pounds top round
2 tablespoons canola or peanut oil
2 medium yellow onions, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon hot Hungarian paprika
1 cup dry red wine, divided
4 to 6 cups beef stock
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon Louisiana hot sauce
1/2 tablespoon ground cumin
1/2 tablespoon cumin seed
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon cracked black pepper
1/2 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
2 fresh Jalapeño peppers, seeded and chopped
2 cups coarsely chopped leeks
1 medium green pepper, chopped
2 cups chopped carrots, divided
1 1/2 cups chopped celery, divided
3 cups diced Red Bliss or Yukon Gold potatoes

Trim any fat from the beef and cut meat into one-inch cubes. In a medium sauté pan, heat oil and sauté beef and onions in split batches over high heat until browned. Add garlic and paprika; cook for two minutes. Transfer to a 6 1/2-quart stockpot. Deglaze sauté pan with one-half cup wine. Add to stockpot. Cover meat mixture with beef stock. Add Worcestershire sauce and hot sauce.



Add one-half cup of chopped carrots and one-half cup of chopped celery. Simmer, covered, over low to medium heat for about 45 minutes or until meat is barely fork tender. Uncover, add cumin, red pepper flakes, thyme, oregano, pepper, and salt; simmer for 10 minutes. Add additional stock if necessary.

Heat sauté pan over medium high heat; add jalapeños and cook for about 30 seconds. Add leeks, green pepper, remaining carrots, and remaining celery. Sauté until vegetables are browned, about five minutes. Remove vegetables from sauté pan and add to stockpot. Add remaining half cup of red wine to sauté pan, bring to boil and transfer liquid to stockpot. Add potatoes to stew and cook, uncovered, for another 10 minutes. Adjust seasonings as needed.

(Chef's note: If the sauce is not thick enough, tighten with a dark roux. The dumplings will also thicken the stock.)

For the dumplings:

- 3 tablespoons shortening
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon celery seed
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon caraway seed
- 3/4 cup whole milk
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Prepare the dumplings:

Sift flour, baking powder, and salt into a mixing bowl. Add thyme, celery seed, parsley, and caraway seed. Cut shortening into flour until mixture forms into crumbs. Stir in the milk. Add olive oil; stir to incorporate.

(Chef's note: Dumpling dough is very much like biscuit dough. The less it is handled, the lighter and tenderer it will be.)

Using two spoons, drop heaping tablespoon-size dumplings atop the stew (not directly into the liquid) and cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Continue cooking, covered, another 10 minutes.

To serve: Ladle stew into individual warmed bowls and place two to three dumplings on top. Garnish with chopped fresh parsley. Serve with tossed salad.