

# Stew simmers in pot

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Only when a beef chunk was tasted and deemed tender enough for her demanding tastes were the potatoes, onions, carrots and celery added. I would be richer than Donald Trump if I could only bottle the aroma that filled every nook and cranny of the house when Momma made stew. To this day, the magical ritual has not changed one iota.

But then, along comes her contemporary son to change just one thing with Momma's ritual. Whereas she threw in whole peppercorns and bay leaves, only to have to retrieve them before serving, I have discovered that a small piece of gauze or clean cotton, with the peppercorns, herbs, spices and bay leaves inserted in the middle, then tied with a piece of string, alleviates the chomping down on a hard peppercorn or overly flavorful bay leaf. Just before serving, simply remove the so-called bouquet garni and toss. Then enjoy.

THE FRENCH are noted for their excellence in stewmaking. Their process utilizes two main French ingredients that have fallen by the

wayside in this day of microwaves and boxed cake mixes, namely, wine and time. Interesting herbs and spices, fresh vegetables and the discreet use of wine can make a fabulous stew, but the true success lies solely in the method of cooking.

A stew that has boiled on high power with as much agitation as a washing machine will cook no faster than one gently urged on the simmer setting. Everyone knows that boiled meat will prove to be tough and stringy and the gravy will be muddy with the flavors "boiled out."

Always simmer with wine for several hours so that the true taste of the vino can marry the remaining flavors into a rich, happy family. Of course, other liquids can be used for braising, such as beer, cider, broth and fresh vegetable juices.

While I'm not talking crockpot cookery here, such an electrical contraption is acceptable when you just can't get your hands on a big, old, heavy, cast-iron dutch oven. Le Creuset makes both an affordable enameled cast-iron dutch oven and a regular cast-iron dutch oven that not only result in the best stews but can double for just about anything from

a casserole to a soup pot.

It is recommended that the skin that forms on the top of the pot while cooking be removed. Allowing a large pot to simmer for hours will not only produce this so-called skin but also will surface an oil or grease slick. A heavy ladle or bent, oversized kitchen spoon works best to remove this without the overmixing that could easily turn a tender pot of stew into barbecue helper.

WHEN IT COMES to thickening, I personally don't feel the need to make everything as thick as motor oil. Some people like a substantial sauce and use a roux to accomplish this. Momma dissolved flour in milk and whisked it through a sieve so as not to get any lumps.

I guess if it was truly necessary, I would thicken with some cooked, pureed vegetables or incorporate the silky-rich taste of cream and egg yolk. Whatever your preference, fork-tender meat and vegetables in a luscious sauce can be an easy accomplishment for a busy cook. In the stewpot, if not in mathematics, the whole is often more than the sum of its parts. Bon Appetit!

## MOM JANE'S BEST BEEF STEW

2 1/2 pound best stewing beef  
1 1/2 cup flour  
3 tablespoons bacon drippings or oil  
2 cups water  
2 cups dry red wine (soup stock can be used, if desired)  
1 bay leaf  
5 peppercorns  
1 teaspoon parsley  
1 teaspoon thyme  
1 teaspoon marjoram  
2 medium potatoes, cubed large  
4 carrots, cut into chunks  
4 stalks celery, cut into chunks  
1 medium onion, cut into chunks  
more wine, if necessary

Coat stewing beef with flour, set aside. Heat bacon drippings or oil in the bottom of a heavy dutch oven. Add beef and brown on all sides, turning frequently with tongs, not stirring. After meat has browned nicely, add water and wine and herbs. (Cheesecloth or other clean, small cloth can be used to wrap herbs and spices for easy retrieval.)

Simmer, covered on lowest heat possible for 2 1/2-3 hours. Beef should be very tender but not shredded. Add vegetables and potatoes. If gravy is too thick, add more wine or broth, if desired. Cover and continue cooking on lowest heat possible for 1 additional hour. Remove bay leaf and peppercorns. Season with salt and pepper, if desired. Enjoy.

## BEEF AND PORK STEW

Serves 8-10  
1/2 pound bacon  
1 pound carrots, sliced  
bay leaves to taste

1 tablespoon thyme  
3 cloves garlic, chopped fine  
1 pound onions, sliced  
3 pounds stew beef, cut into cubes  
1 pound boneless pork, cut into cubes  
1 pound mushrooms, sliced thick  
1 cup brandy  
2 quarts red wine

In a large dutch oven, saute bacon till crisp, add beef, 1 pound at a time and cook just to brown. Add remaining ingredients except mushrooms and mix well. Cover and bake at 325 degrees for 3 hours. Remove the cover, correct the seasonings (salt and fresh ground pepper) and gently stir in mushrooms. Bake uncovered for 1 1/2 hours or until reduced by half.

## LUXEMBOURG STEW

3 pounds veal shoulder, cubed  
1/2 cup flour  
1/2 cup butter  
1 onion, sliced  
1 pound tomatoes, skinned and seeded  
5 whole cloves  
1 bay leaf  
pinch thyme, rosemary, marjoram  
2 1/2 cups beer  
6 ginger snaps  
juice of 1 lemon

Roll veal cubes in flour. Melt butter and brown veal lightly. Remove veal and saute onion, adding a little more butter if needed. Return veal to the pan, add tomatoes, seasonings and beer. Cover and cook for 2 hours in a slow oven or over medium-low heat. Moisten ginger snaps with water, crush and add to the meat mix-

ture. Cook for 1 hour. Just before serving, add lemon juice. Serve with rice or potatoes.

## RAGOUT OF LAMB

Serves 10-12  
4 pounds boneless lamb, cut into cubes  
1/2 cup oil  
1 1/2 tablespoons sugar  
1 1/2 teaspoons salt  
dash pepper  
1/2 cup flour  
3 cups beef broth or bouillon  
3 tablespoons tomato paste  
3 cloves garlic, mashed  
pinch rosemary  
1 bay leaf  
12 new potatoes, unpeeled  
6 carrots, sliced  
6 turnips peeled and cubed  
16 small white onions, peeled  
2 cups fresh or frozen peas  
2 cups fresh green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces

Brown lamb a few pieces at a time in hot oil. Place in a casserole or dutch oven and sprinkle with sugar and toss over high heat till sugar caramelizes. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and flour. Cook a few minutes till the flour browns. Add broth to the pan and cook, stirring to mix liquid and flour. Add tomato paste and seasonings. Cover and simmer for 1 hour. Add potatoes, carrots, turnips and onions, simmer covered for 1 hour. Add green beans, cook 30 minutes, 5 minutes before serving, stir in peas. Taste and correct seasonings.

# Just follow your nose to cinnamon-bun shop

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Mom's rolls are frosted with a confectioner's sugar icing. The shop also sells raisin and pecan varieties and several selections of muffins, bread and other baked goods.

THE ORIGINAL (cinnamon roll) sells two-to-one over everything else," Thiemann said.

T.J. Cinnamon's sells the requisite eight-ounce cinnamon roll, as well as

a five-ounce pecan "sticky bun."

"They are real gooey and sticky," said Lauren King of West Bloomfield Township, supervisor of the three local T.J. Cinnamon's.

The Farmington shop is carry-out only. Royal Oak and Pontiac stores have tables and, "We have people who come in with their briefcases and work," while eating, King said.

Following are locations for the shops mentioned in this story:

- Cinnacraz: Wonderland Mall, Plymouth and Middlebelt roads, Livonia; Briarwood Mall, Ann Arbor; Twelve Oaks Mall, Novi; and Sheldon and Ann Arbor roads, Plymouth.
- Mom's Cinnamon Rolls: Laurel Park Plaza, Six Mile and Newburgh roads, Livonia.
- T.J. Cinnamon's: 4702 N. Woodward, Royal Oak; 33181 Grand River at Farmington Road, Farmington; and 510 N. Telegraph, Oakland Pointe Shopping Center, Plymouth.

## QUICK BUTTERMILK SWEET DOUGH

2 packages active dry yeast  
1/2 cup warm water (105-115 degrees)  
1 1/4 cups buttermilk  
2 eggs  
5 1/2 to 6 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
2 teaspoons salt

In large mixer bowl dissolve yeast in warm water. Add buttermilk, eggs, 2 1/2 cups flour, butter, sugar, baking powder and salt. Blend 1/4 minute on low speed, scraping bowl constantly. Beat 2 minutes medium speed, scraping bowl occasionally. Stir in enough remaining flour to

make dough easy to handle. Dough should remain soft and slightly sticky. Turn dough onto well-floured board; knead 5 minutes or about 200 turns. Shape dough immediately (no need to let rise) into desired rolls. Cover; let rise in warm place until double, about 1 hour. Dough is ready if impression remains when touched.

## CINNAMON ROLLS

1 recipe quick buttermilk sweet dough  
2 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened  
1/4 cup sugar  
2 teaspoons cinnamon

Roll dough into rectangle, 15x9 inches; spread with butter. Mix sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over rectangle. Roll up, beginning at wide

side. Pinch edge of dough into roll to seal well. Stretch roll to make even. Cut roll into 15 slices. Place slightly apart in greased baking pan, 13-by-9-by-2 inches, or in greased muffin cups. Let rise until double. Bake 25-30 minutes at 375 degrees. While warm, frost rolls with icing.

## Sweet Icing

Mix 1 cup confectioner's sugar, 1 tablespoon milk and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla until smooth

(Recipes from Betty Crocker's Cookbook, copyright 1989 by General Mills, Inc., Minneapolis, Minn.; Good Ship, Little, New York; Western Publishing Co., Racine, Wis.)

## clarification

In Larry Jones' recipe for Escargot, from his "Taste buds" column Jan. 15, the eight cloves of garlic called for are to be combined along with the other ingredients that go into the food processor, to be processed until finely chopped.

Instructions were incomplete in the recipe for Spicy Shrimp with Snow Peas, in the Monday, Jan. 22,

Taste section. Here is the correct information: In 3-quart microwaveable dish, combine snow peas, red pepper, green onions and corn oil. Cover; microwave on high 1 minute. Stir in sauce and dried red pepper. Microwave uncovered 2 minutes. Add shrimp. Microwave, stirring twice, 9-10 minutes or until sauce boils and thickens and shrimp are tender. Makes 4 servings.

## cooking calendar

### At Jacobson's

A Taste of the Orient Weekend will be held Thursday-Saturday, Feb. 22-24, at Jacobson's Dearborn Store. As part of the event, Christine Liu will create several dishes from her books from noon to 2 p.m. Feb. 24 in the Kitchen Shop. Liu's books will be available for sale and autographing.

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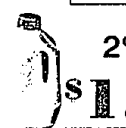
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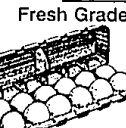
U.S. #1 Fresh NAVEL ORANGES  
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## LaRose Coupon



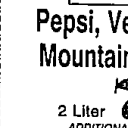
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Eckrich Smoked or Polska SAUSAGE  
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