

Family Safe - Lightly spiced beef stew



#Beef #Tagine #Lightlyspiced #Easy #Famillysafe #Cumin #Coriander

This is an easy meal to prepare and cook, and is one that you can do for visiting friends and family, especially those that do not like things too spicy. It will be a good balance of warm spice (not too dull) and only little heat (not too spicy for grandma!).

Ingredients: (For 4 people)

| | |
|--|---|
| 1kg Rump Steak | Cumin Powder (2 Heaped tsp) |
| 4 Shallots (Echalion, or "banana shallots" are best) | Coriander Powder (1 heaped tsp) |
| 2 Red Onions | Star Anise (1) |
| 1 Green Pepper | Cinnamon Stick (3-5 cm stick) |
| 6 Large (6cm across approx) Mushrooms | Honey (1 tbsp) |
| 4-5 Garlic cloves | Butter (large knob) |
| 2 Mild Green Chilli | Beef Stock (300ml) (a stock cube is fine) |
| 400ml tin of Chopped Tomatoes | Vegetable Oil (I used Sunflower Oil, not Olive Oil) |
| Dried Oregano (large pinch) | Rice, Pasta or Couscous (to serve) |
| Dark Soy Sauce (1-2 tbsp) | |

Equipment:

Heavy based pan or cooking pot
Large saucepan for rice
Chopping boards
Knives,
Wooden spoon
Chopstick

Preparation:

Place the large pot on the hob, and put in the butter and oil to cover the bottom of the pot.



Peel the onions, shallots, garlic, and remove the seeds from the chillis.



Once the vegetables are almost there, put the hob on under the pot, to a low heat.

Slice the onions and two of the shallots to about 3mm thick slices, and place in the pot to gently soften.



While this is happening (over 5-8 minutes), give it a gentle stir every so often with a wooden spoon or spatula, to just prevent it starting to stick and burn.

#Fatbloke Top-Tip #1

Get some non-slip drawer liner (it costs pennies in large supermarkets), and cut a piece to go under your chopping board. It saves the work surface, and also holds the board still like glue when the blades are slicing and dicing.....so less likelihood of having fingertip in the mix!



Meanwhile, de-seed and chop the chillis and slice the garlic,



#Fatbloke Top-Tip #2

A good knife or two are worth their weight in gold. Sharp knives are safer than blunt ones, as they are more precise, and less likely to slip and take off that fingertip. Essential tools: a reasonable chopping board (plus one to do meat on), and a couple of knives that have been properly sharpened.



Once the onions and shallots have sweated a bit, they should start to look like this:



Once they are ready (don't worry if they have started to caramelise [=burn] a little, it adds a nice taste, so long as they are still mostly recognisable), it is time to add the garlic and chilli, taking care not to let the garlic burn. Add a decent pinch of dried oregano, which I think goes really well in this dish, and stir gently until softened throughout.



Preparing the Steak:

On the meat chopping board, take the steak and cut into 3 or 4 cm cubes or chunks.



Once this is done, and the onions and garlic are ready, just pop in the steak, and increase the heat to just below medium, gently stirring to just start to brown the meat.





When the steak has started to just lose its rawness, it will start to look like this...

Now it is time to add the spices, so put in 2 heaped teaspoons of cumin powder, and one of coriander, and a star anise, plus a 3-5cm piece of cinnamon stick. Add 1-2 tbsp honey (runny honey works well here), plus a tbsp or two of dark soy sauce, and gently stir it all in:



Once the spices are mixed in, the dish will start to take on its proper colour.



Stir this often to prevent it sticking, until everything is well mixed, then add a tin of tomatoes, and 300ml of beef stock, to cover the meat, and stir. At the same time, slice and add another two shallots, so that there is a blend of fried and non-fried shallot in the final dish.



Bring it all to a very gentle simmer, and it should end up looking like this...



#Fatbloke Top-Tip #3

A good heavy-based pot, (I use a cast-iron one) is very controllable, and tends not to burn as easily as a lighter one. They may be a little more (or a lot more) expensive, but they last for ages, cook well, and are a doddle to clean afterwards. A single chopstick I have also found is the ideal device for just holding the lid off, to allow the gentlest of simmering.

Once it is all underway, cover, and just leave the lid slightly open, so that the simmering is not too fierce.



Leave this for an hour (or maybe longer if the steak is still tough), checking and gently stirring every few minutes, and adding boiling water if things start to look a bit dry.

After 50 minutes, put a large pan of water on for the rice, and while that is coming to the boil, slice and add a green pepper, and the mushrooms to the main pot, gently stirring them in.

Now is the time to taste, and add salt / pepper, or a little extra chilli powder if you want a bit more heat.



Put the lid on fully (without the chopstick) for the last few minutes.

Once the water for the rice is boiling, add Basmati (or whatever rice, pasta, or cous-cous you prefer) and cook as per manufacturers instructions.

With five minutes to go, turn the heat off under the main pot, and give it a last stir, then replace the lid and leave until needed.

Drain the rice, and serve together!