

Belgian Beer Stew

Cooking with beer is an ancient practice, probably older than cooking with wine. It lightens pastries and batters, tenderizes and glazes meats, and thanks to its yeasts, may well have led to the invention of leavened bread. The following recipe is a good example of the added richness that beer can bring to a simple meat stew; as with wine cookery, the better the beer, the better the final result. A few points about using beer as a cooking ingredient: 1) use it warm, not chilled; 2) use it flat rather than fresh, so you can measure the quantity accurately; and 3) you need not worry about the alcohol, as this will boil off during the cooking process.

Ingredients

4 - 5 slices bacon, chopped
2 tbsp. oil
1 10-ounce package frozen pearl onions (or fresh, if you fancy peeling them)
1 large clove garlic, chopped
2 lbs chuck roast (or any good quality stewing beef), cut into 1-inch cubes
1 12-ounce can or bottle of beer, any style (not lager or fruit beers, though!)
1 tbsp. lemon juice
Chopped fresh parsley for garnish
1 16-ounce package of egg noodles, cooked

In a stock pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the bacon and render the fat. Add the onions and garlic, and cook for five minutes or until soft. Remove the mixture from the pot and reserve in separate dish. Brown the meat in the pot. Return the onion mixture to the pot and stir in the beer. Cover and simmer 1 ½ hours or until tender. Add more beer if necessary. Remove the pot from the heat and add the lemon juice. Serve over egg noodles and garnish with parsley.

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