

Beef Goulash

I am not a great beef eater but I recently discovered Beef Skirt (for a Steak and Kidney pie) and loved it - it actually has beef flavour [shock, horror]. Anxious to use it again, I went in search of another suitable recipe and came across an old 60s favourite from *Supercook*: *Bogrács Gulyás*, Hungarian Beef Goulash. Beef brisket also works very well or, for the adventurous, beef heart.

Missing from the 60s, which is probably when I last cooked this, was the Internet. I now know that, as is frequently the case with recipes, there are as many variations as there are cooks and also that a *bogrács* is the traditional iron pot in which this would have been cooked over an open wood fire. Yikes! (The *Supercook* version used neither a *bogrács* nor an open fire.)

I discovered another interesting snippet: a Hungarian Goulash is traditionally more of a soup than it is a stew. (The *Supercook* version was not.) However, I wanted more of a stew. So, in deference to the fact that I've made my own amendments to this dish, cook it indoors and used the flavour concepts rather than the precision, I avoid calling it *Bogrács Gulyás* and refer to it simply as Beef Goulash. As a nod to the smoky fire cooking approach, I put some smoked paprika into the mix.

Should you fancy the more traditional approach in a cast iron pot strung over an open wood fire, feel free to go ahead, though you will almost certainly need more liquid.

Planning

serves:	4
prep time:	15 mins
cooking time:	3 hrs

Ingredients

900g Beef Skirt, in 2.5cm cubes
rapeseed oil (or vegetable oil)
3 medium-large onions, chopped
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 tbs sweet paprika
2 tsp sweet smoked paprika
1 tbs plain flour
2 tbs tomato purée
2 bay leaves
250ml red wine
250ml beef stock
2 tsp dried marjoram
3 large tomatoes, (skinned &) chopped
2 sweet peppers (red/yellow/orange)
150ml sour cream

Method

Grab a heavy casserole (or cast iron pot) and begin by browning the cubes of beef in a few tablespoons of oil over a medium high heat. You will doubtless need to do this in batches. As the meat browns, remove it from the pan and set aside.

When all the meat is browned, lower the heat to medium and add the onions to the same pan, using additional oil if necessary. Cook these, stirring occasionally, for ~5 minutes until soft and translucent. Throw in the garlic and cook for another minute. Now add the paprikas to the onions and stir to get them well coated. Add the flour and stir well to distribute it before adding the liquids - stock, wine and tomato purée. Continue stirring until the liquid comes to simmering point.

Return the browned meat to the pan together with the bay leaves, marjoram, chopped tomatoes (you can have skinned them if you are desperate for work), ~20 turns of your black pepper mill and a teaspoon or so of salt. Cover the pan with its lid, reduce the heat to low and simmer very gently for ~90 minutes.

While the meat is simmering, cut your sweet peppers (a mixture of colours is good) into strips (~½cm thick), removing the seeds and pith as you go. When the meat has simmered and is more or less tender, add the pepper strips, stirring well to distribute. Continue cooking for another 30 minutes.

Finally, stir in the sour cream and cook for another 5 minutes

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Salt & pepper

before adjusting the seasoning and serving.

This is good served with some ribbon noodles and, perhaps, some plain boiled young carrots. (Yes, I know I don't usually do carrots.)