

Dijon and Cognac Beef Stew

Regina Schrambling, in the New York Times, 2001



- 1/4 pound bacon, or salt pork, diced
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 3 whole shallots, chopped
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, or more as needed
- 2 pounds beef stew meat, preferably chuck, cut in 1" pieces
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup brandy, or Cognac
- 2 cups beef broth
- 1/2 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup whole grain mustard (divided use)
- 4 large carrots, peeled, halved lengthwise, cut in half-moons
- 1 pound mushrooms, stemmed and quartered
- 1/4 cup dry red wine

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons:
<http://tastingspoons.com>

Servings: 6

The little bacon pieces I added back into the stew just before serving. Don't burn the meat as you're browning it - do it at medium to avoid a blackened skillet, if necessary. If you burn the bottom, it will add a burned taste to the sauce. I've doubled the amount of mushrooms called for. You will probably need more butter with each batch of the beef you brown. My Le Creuset pan required 3 batches.

1. Place bacon in Dutch oven or other heavy pot over medium-low heat and cook until the fat is rendered. Remove the solid pieces with a slotted spoon and discard. Raise the heat, add onion and shallots and cook until softened but not brown, 10-15 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer to a large bowl.
2. If necessary, add 2 T. butter to the pot to augment the fat and increase heat to medium high. Dust the beef with the flour, salt and pepper. Add half of the meat cubes to the pan and brown on at least 2 sides until meat is well browned, even crusty, then transfer to the bowl. Add more butter to the pan and brown the other half of the meat. Remove the second batch to the bowl.
3. Add the brandy to the pot and cook, stirring, until the bottom is deglazed and the crust comes loose [this didn't happen for me]. Add the beef broth, Dijon mustard and just 1 T. of the grainy mustard to the pot. Whisk to blend (you don't want any little clumps of Dijon visible), then return meat and onion mixture to the pot. Lower the heat, partially cover the pot and simmer gently until the meat is very tender, about 1 1/2 hours. [Watch temperature carefully - it should just barely simmer - if liquid evaporates, add water.]
4. Add the carrots and continue simmering for 30 minutes, or until tender.
5. Meanwhile, melt 2 T. butter in a medium skillet over medium-high heat and saute the mushrooms until browned and tender.
6. Stir the mushrooms into the stew, along with the remaining 3 T. grainy mustard and red wine. Simmer for 5 minutes, then taste for seasonings.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 586 Calories; 32g Fat (53.8% calories from fat); 45g Protein; 16g Carbohydrate; 3g Dietary Fiber; 120mg Cholesterol; 1222mg Sodium. Exchanges: 0 Grain(Starch); 6 Lean Meat; 2 Vegetable; 3 Fat; 0 Other Carbohydrates.