



Chef John Bishop's Oven-braised Venison Ragout

Since venison is a lean meat, the addition of meatballs is a good way to add juiciness and another texture to the dish. Instead of venison, you can use bison, beef, lamb or pork. Serves 6



Chef John Bishop

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Ingredients:

1 1/2 lbs venison stew
 meat, in 1-inch cubes
 1 cup flour
 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 1 onion, chopped
 1 carrot, in 1/4-inch dice
 1/2 cup diced (1/4 inch) celery root
 1/2 cup diced (1/4 inch) fennel bulb
 1 cup sliced shiitake
 mushrooms or chanterelles
 4 cloves garlic, sliced
 1/2 cup tomato paste
 1/2 bottle (375 mL) dry red wine
 4 cups beef or
 chicken stock, heated
 1/4 cup whole juniper berries
 1 tsp chopped rosemary
 1 tsp chopped thyme
 1 bay leaf
 Pinch of allspice
 Pinch of paprika
 Pinch of Chinese
 five-spice powder
 2 Tbsp honey
 1/4 cup single malt Scotch or a
 good blended Scotch whiskey
 2 tangerines, juice of
 12 oz sausage meat,
 in twelve 1-oz balls
 1/4 cup chopped

parsley for garnish

Directions:

Season

venison with salt and freshly ground black pepper, then toss in flour, coating all sides. Heat oil in a large frying pan on medium-high heat. Add venison and sear until all sides are browned and sealed, then transfer to a large lidded casserole dish. Keep the frying pan and its juices. Preheat the oven to 375°f. Place the frying pan back on the burner on medium-high heat. Add onion, carrot, celery root, fennel bulb, mushrooms and garlic, then cover and cook for 5 to 10 minutes, or until vegetables soften. Stir in tomato paste, wine and heated stock. Add juniper berries, rosemary, thyme, bay leaf, allspice, paprika, Chinese five-spice and honey. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir mixture well, then pour over the venison in the casserole dish. Cover the casserole and bake in the oven for 1 1/2 hours. Remove the casserole from the oven. Gently stir whiskey and tangerine juice into the ragout, then dot the top with meatballs. Re-cover the casserole and return to the oven to cook for 20 minutes.

To Serve

Ladle the ragout into warmed soup plates and garnish with parsley.

Wine

Hillside Estate Winery Mosaic red blend or Robin Ridge Winery Merlot