

Irish Lamb Stew

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A hearty and classic stew dish that is bursting with traditional Irish flavors, this lamb stew is a great meal for cold winter nights. Smoky bacon, tender lamb, and vegetables are simmered in dark beer to perfection. This dish is surprisingly easy, so prep it when you get home from work and allow the flavors to simmer for a few hours until dinner is ready, and deliciously perfect.

Ingredients:

¼ lb bacon, chopped
2 lb lamb stew meat, cubed
salt and ground black pepper, to taste
2 stalks celery, sliced
1 carrot, chopped
1 red onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped
2 Tbsp rosemary
1 Tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
1 Tbsp oregano
1 (12 oz) can dark beer
1 (14.5) oz diced tomatoes, with juice
4 c. beef stock
1 c. pearl barley, rinsed
1 lb red potatoes, cubed
2 carrots, sliced
1 rutabaga, peeled and cubed
2 c. sliced fresh mushrooms
3 Tbsp flour

Directions:

1. Heat large pot over medium heat. Add bacon, and stir until browned and crisp, about 10 minutes. Remove bacon with slotted spoon, leaving drippings in pot and set aside.
2. Toss lamb with salt and black pepper, and brown meat in bacon fat. Set lamb aside and add celery, chopped carrot, red onion, garlic, rosemary, thyme, and oregano into the bacon drippings. Cook until onion is softened and translucent, about 5 minutes.
3. Add beer to pan, reserving ¼ c. in small bowl and set aside. Bring mixture to boil, and cook until liquid has reduced by half. Scrape bottom of pan to incorporate all bacon fat.
4. Add bacon and lamb back into stew. Mix in tomatoes and beef stock, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 1 ½ hours. Add pearl barley and simmer 15 minutes more. Add potatoes, carrots, rutabaga and mushrooms and simmer, uncovered, until potatoes are tender, about 30 minutes.
5. Whisk flour into reserved beer until smooth. Stir into stew and thicken, stirring until thickened, about 5 minutes.

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