Posted on 7 November 2016

by Liz Robb

Rose Veal Stifado

Ingredients

About 850g rose veal
4 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil
1 large onion
3 fat cloves of garlic
250ml red grape juice
2 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar
2 stems of rosemary
3 bay leaves
A little grated nutmeg
Half a teaspoon of cinnamon
Half a teaspoon of allspice
2 heaped tablespoons of tomato puree
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
4-5 large vine tomatoes
500ml good vegetable stock
600g small shallots
Servings
4
Person

Preparation

1. Trim the meat and cut it into large bite sized pieces. Heat a tablespoon of olive oil in a large frying pan and quickly sear the meat, browning it on all sides, then lift the pieces out of the pan with a slotted spoon and leave to one side on a plate. You will probably need to do this in 2 or 3 batches.
2. Peel and finely slice the onion then peel and finely chop the garlic. Heat another 2 tablespoons of olive oil in the same pan that the meat was cooked in, then gently sauté the onion on a low heat for 2-3 minutes, add the garlic and cook for another 2 minutes.
3. Pour in the grape juice, add the balsamic vinegar, bring to a simmer and cook gently for 5 minutes, stirring as you do so to incorporate any juices or bits of meat on the bottom.
4. Meanwhile, score the tomatoes and cover in boiling water, drain and peel off the skins. Chop the tomatoes and stir into the pan.
5. Next add the herbs and spices. Pull the rosemary leaves from the stems and chop finely then add them with the bay leaves, nutmeg, cinnamon and allspice. Season well with salt and black pepper.
6. Pour about three quarters of the hot stock into the pan and stir well, then transfer it all to the slow cooker. Keep it simmering for an hour and a half to two hours, checking occasionally in case it dries out and topping up with more stock when needed.
7. Peel the shallots, keeping them whole if they are small and cutting bigger ones in half. Heat a tablespoon of oil in a pan and brown the shallots for about 5 minutes, turning them so that they caramelise on all sides. Add them to the stew and then cook for another hour, stirring gently occasionally, trying to keep the shallots in one piece, and checking that there is enough liquid. The veal in the stifado should be really tender and the shallots should be soft and golden, and the thick sauce should have a deep, rich flavour.
8. Serve with roasted rosemary potatoes and seasonal green vegetables, with pasta or rice, or simply eat a bowlful with flatbread or fresh crusty bread.

Cooks Note

Stifado is a traditional Greek dish where veal or beef is cooked slowly until tender, with shallots for sweetness, in a rich spiced tomato-based sauce.

I first ate this many years ago in a Greek taverna on holiday and loved it! But my knowledge of the language was too poor to translate the word “veal” or else I probably wouldn’t have chosen it then, because of the poor animal welfare standards associated with veal production. However, this week I decided to try making the dish using rose veal which is now produced “ethically” on a local farm, and it was delicious! You can substitute it with beef though if you prefer.
It is traditionally made with red wine, but I think that red grape juice makes an acceptable alcohol free alternative. Serves 4-5 people.