BEEF STEW WITH RED WINE & VEGETABLES (for 6-8)
Source: STAFFMEALS AT CHANTERELLE (Chef David Waltuck)

INGREDIENTS:

4 thick slices (4 oz) slab bacon, cut crosswise into 1/2" pieces
1 medium onion, diced
5 cloves garlic, minced
3-6 TBS canola or other vegetable oil
3 bay leaves
3.5 lbs boneless beef chuck, trimmed of fat, cut into 1" cubes
1 bottle (750 ml) hearty, full-bodied red wine (e.g., Cotes-du-Rhône of CA Cabernet)
1/2 C brandy
1 tsp dried thyme leaves
7 C beefed-up veal stock Or canned low-sodium beef broth
1-2 TBS beurre maniè (see below) (optional)
1 piece (3" square) bacon rind (optional)
4 large carrots, peeled/cut into 1/2"-thick rounds
2 large waxy potatoes (e.g., Yukon Gold), peeled/cut into 1" cubes
10 oz fresh cultivated white mushrooms, halved or quartered if large
Coarse salt + freshly ground black pepper, to taste
4 oz green beans, ends trimmed
1.5 C cauliflower florets

Beurre maniè or kneaded butter: equal parts softened un-salted butter + all-purpose flour worked into a paste – it thickens sauces + stews, especially simmering gravies of braised meat dishes. It is whisked quickly into liquids, which should then be simmered 15 minutes or more so the flour loses its raw, starchy taste.

DIRECTIONS:

In large, heavy, flameproof casserole or Dutch oven, sauté bacon over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, till crisp (about 10 minutes) – add onion + garlic (+ oil if needed) and sauté till softened but not browned (about 5 minutes), stirring occasionally.

Meanwhile, heat 3 TBS oil in large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat – add only enough beef cubes to fit without crowding – brown well on all sides (4-5 minutes per side) – transfer to casserole. Brown remaining beef in batches (adding more oil as necessary) – don't let skillet bottom burn. When beef is browned/removed from skillet, add 1 C wine to skillet - bring to boil, scraping browned bits in bottom of pan – pour skillet contents into casserole along with brandy + 2 C more of wine. Increase heat to high – reduce liquid by 2/3 (15-20 minutes) – take care, as it may ignite.

Add veal stock, bacon rind (if desired), bay leaves + thyme – bring to boil, then reduce heat to very low – cook beef very gently, partially covered, for 1.5 hours. If liquid doesn't appear to be thickening at this point, whisk in some beurre maniè. Add carrots, potatoes + mushrooms – season with salt + pepper. Continue simmering till meat + vegetables are tender (30 minutes more). Add cauliflower + green beans – cook till crisp-tender (30 seconds more) - remove casserole from heat, discarding bay leaves + bacon rind. Adjust seasoning with salt + pepper – serve.