

# MODERN BEEF BURGUNDY

Classic French recipes require you to stand over the stove. We move the whole operation to the oven.



To eliminate stovetop browning, we roast the salt pork and vegetables and braise the beef in the oven.

**B**eef Burgundy, or *boeuf bourguignon*, is the ultimate beef stew. The problem is that it's a pain to make and requires a serious time commitment. I wanted to eliminate the fuss but stay true to this stew's rich flavor profile.

To start, I borrowed some tricks from past test kitchen recipes for stew: salting the meat for 30 minutes to season it and help it retain moisture during cooking, and beefing up the broth with umami enhancers (anchovy paste and porcini mushrooms). To build body, I stirred some powdered gelatin into the braising liquid; it mimicked the consistency of homemade stock. Next, I decided to cut out the messy browning of the beef based on a discovery that we made a few years back: Braised meat can develop color if the pieces are not fully submerged in liquid, because its exposed surface will eventually reach 300 degrees—the temperature at which meat begins to brown. My tasters attested to this batch's savoriness, but they wanted even more of it.

Then it occurred to me to try moving my dish to a roasting pan; thanks to its generous surface area, the braising liquid would pool less deeply, exposing more of the beef chunks for better browning. The tops of the meat chunks took on lots of color, and the rich flavor seeped into the sauce. I streamlined my recipe even further by browning the salt pork in the roasting pan before I added the beef. By initially cranking up the oven to 500 degrees, I replicated the

stove's searing heat and got the pork pieces good and crispy. For even more meaty flavor, I tossed in the trimmed beef scraps and browned them with the salt pork. Finally, I sat the beef chunks on the pork and vegetables before braising to raise them even higher out of the liquid.

I was still spending an hour cooking the mushrooms and browning and braising the pearl onions to get them good and caramelized. To pare down the time, I spread the onions and mushrooms on a baking sheet and roasted them while the salt pork and beef scraps cooked in the roasting pan. My boeuf bourguignon tasted just as rich and complex as the classic version—and I didn't need to stand over the stove all day to make it.

—ANDREW JANJIGIAN, *Cook's Illustrated*

## Modern Beef Burgundy

SERVES 6 TO 8

If the pearl onions have a papery outer coating, remove it by rinsing the onions in warm water and gently squeezing individual onions between your fingertips. Two minced anchovy fillets can be used in place of the anchovy paste. To save time, salt the meat and let it stand while you prep the remaining ingredients. Serve with mashed potatoes or buttered noodles.

- 1 (4-pound) boneless beef chuck-eye roast, trimmed and cut into 1½- to 2-inch pieces, scraps reserved**
- Salt and pepper**
- 6 ounces salt pork, cut into ¼-inch pieces**
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- 1 pound cremini mushrooms, trimmed, halved if medium or quartered if large**
- 1½ cups frozen pearl onions, thawed**
- 1 tablespoon sugar**
- ½ cup all-purpose flour**
- 4 cups beef broth**
- 1 (750-ml) bottle red Burgundy or Pinot Noir**
- 5 teaspoons unflavored gelatin**
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste**
- 1 teaspoon anchovy paste**
- 2 onions, chopped coarse**
- 2 carrots, peeled and cut into 2-inch lengths**
- 1 garlic head, cloves separated, unpeeled, and smashed**
- ½ ounce dried porcini mushrooms, rinsed**
- 10 sprigs fresh parsley, plus 3 tablespoons minced**

**6 sprigs fresh thyme**

**2 bay leaves**

**½ teaspoon black peppercorns**

1. Toss beef and 1½ teaspoons salt together in bowl and let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.

2. Adjust oven racks to lower-middle and lowest positions and heat oven to 500 degrees. Place salt pork, beef scraps, and 2 tablespoons butter in large roasting pan. Roast on upper rack until well browned and fat has rendered, 15 to 20 minutes.

3. While salt pork and beef scraps roast, toss cremini mushrooms, pearl onions, remaining 1 tablespoon butter, and sugar together on rimmed baking sheet. Roast on lower rack, stirring occasionally, until moisture released by mushrooms evaporates and vegetables are lightly glazed, 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer vegetables to large bowl, cover, and refrigerate.

4. Remove roasting pan from oven and reduce temperature to 325 degrees. Sprinkle flour over rendered fat and whisk until no dry flour remains. Whisk in broth, 2 cups wine, gelatin, tomato paste, and anchovy paste until combined. Add onions, carrots, garlic, porcini mushrooms, parsley sprigs, thyme sprigs, bay leaves, and peppercorns to pan. Arrange beef in single layer on top of vegetables. Add water needed to come three-quarters up side of beef (beef should not be submerged). Return roasting pan to oven and cook until meat is tender, 3 to 3½ hours, stirring after 1½ hours and adding water to keep meat at least half-submerged.

5. Using slotted spoon, transfer beef to bowl with cremini mushrooms and pearl onions. Cover and set aside. Strain braising liquid through fine-mesh strainer set over large bowl, pressing on solids to extract as much liquid as possible; discard solids. Stir in remaining wine and let cooking liquid settle, 10 minutes. Using wide, shallow spoon, skim fat from surface and discard.

6. Transfer liquid to Dutch oven and bring mixture to boil over medium-high heat. Simmer briskly, stirring occasionally, until sauce thickened to consistency of heavy cream, 15 to 20 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low, stir in beef and mushroom-onion mixture, cover, and cook until just heated through, 5 to 8 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Stir in minced parsley. Serve.