

With Autumn well under way and the weather decidedly dull today, it's time for some comfort food. Shin beef is one of those cuts which is very-much under rated. Cooked slowly it's got a depth of flavour you'll not find in other cuts such as steak. Your butcher will be able to supply shin beef and it's an in-expense cut.

Ingredients:-

olive oil

2 red onions, peeled and roughly chopped

3 carrots, peeled and roughly chopped

3 sticks celery, trimmed and roughly chopped

4 cloves garlic, unpeeled

a few sprigs fresh rosemary

2 bay leaves

1 small handful dried porcini

1 stick cinnamon

1 kg quality shin of beef, bone removed, trimmed and cut into 5cm pieces

sea salt

freshly ground black pepper

1 tablespoon flour

2 x 400 g good-quality tinned plum tomatoes

1/2 bottle Chianti

Method:-

Cooking a shin of beef or any good stewing cut this way gives you some really fantastic comfort food. Just letting it slowly simmer away in the oven, with the sauce becoming more and more intense, is the nicest sort of cooking there is. Delicious served with some mashed root veg ? like carrots, potatoes, a bit of swede, some turnips maybe?

Preheat your oven to 180ºC/350ºF/gas 4. In a heavy-bottomed ovenproof saucepan, heat a splash of olive oil and gently fry the onions, carrots, celery, garlic, herbs, porcini and cinnamon for 5 minutes until softened slightly. Meanwhile, toss the pieces of beef in a little seasoned flour, shaking off any excess. Add the meat to the pan and stir everything together, then add the tomatoes, wine and a pinch of salt and pepper. Gently bring to the boil, cover with a double-thickness piece of tinfoil and a lid and place in your preheated oven for 3 hours or until the beef is meltingly tender and can be broken up with a spoon. Taste and check the seasoning, remove the cinnamon stick and rosemary sprigs and serve.

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