

Red Rooster Braised Venison

By Tom Dickson

Preparation time: 30 minutes | Cooking time: 3 hours | Serves 4



INGREDIENTS

2 lbs. deer or elk shanks, neck meat, or tough shoulder meat (or, if you lack venison, six 6-ounce beef short ribs)

Salt and pepper

2 T. vegetable oil

1 small onion, chopped

1 carrot, trimmed and chopped

1 celery rib, trimmed and chopped

1 lemongrass stalk, trimmed, smashed, and minced (or zest from ½ lemon)

2 garlic cloves, chopped

1 (1-inch) piece ginger, peeled and minced

½ c. dry red wine

2 c. beef or chicken broth

½ c. plum sauce

¼ c. soy sauce

½ t. dried thyme flakes

1 t. chopped flat-leaf parsley

1 bay leaf

DIRECTIONS

Heat oven to 300 degrees. Pat meat dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper.

Heat oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. When oil shimmers, add meat and brown on all sides, about 4 minutes per side; transfer to a plate.

Add onion, carrot, celery, lemongrass, garlic, and ginger to the pot. Season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring often, for 5 minutes. Add wine, broth, plum sauce, soy sauce, thyme, parsley, and bay leaf and bring to a simmer.

Return meat to pot, along with any juices. Cover and slide pot into oven. Braise until meat is fork-tender, about 3 hours.

Pull meat off bone and transfer to a plate (or leave meat on if desired). Strain braising liquid through a fine mesh sieve. Discard bay leaves and transfer vegetables to a food processor. Whiz up the mixture until smooth, then add 1½ cups of the braising liquid and whiz to combine.

Return sauce to Dutch oven and season to taste with salt and pepper. Add meat and reheat.

Spoon meat and sauce over mashed potatoes, or serve with crusty bread to soak up the scrumptious sauce. ■

This dish, perfect for a holiday dinner with guests, is based on Marcus Samuelsson's braised short ribs served at his Red Rooster Harlem restaurant in New York City.

A best-selling cookbook author and award-winning chef, Samuelsson was born in Ethiopia but raised in Sweden, where his adopted grandmother taught him to cook. While growing up in rural Scandinavia, he learned how to prepare waterfowl, rabbit, and other game. World's Best Venison Stew, our version of his yummy moose stew recipe, appeared here in the March-April 2013 issue.

Red Rooster Braised Venison is yet another reason I treasure shanks, the neck, and tough shoulder meat above all other cuts on an elk or deer. People think I'm nuts—until they come over for dinner.

You can find lemongrass (produce section) and plum sauce (Asian foods aisle) at natural food stores or the larger grocery chains. Tips on how to prepare lemongrass, a staple of many Asian recipes, are available online. If you can't find any, lemon zest is a decent substitute. 🐘

—Tom Dickson is editor of Montana Outdoors.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Several readers have asked about a chocolate cake I've mentioned a few times in this column. It's hands down the best cake I've ever eaten, and I thought I'd share it this holiday season. Find the recipe by Googling "NYT whiskey chocolate bundt cake." For the whiskey, try the Pendleton 1910 Canadian rye.

