



Metfield Bakery

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SUMMER RABBIT STEW

Serves: Depends on size of your pot and how many rabbits you can shoot

Preparation time: Depends on your shooting skills

Cooking time: Couple of hours

METHOD

1. Soak some haricots or other dried beans the night before you make the stew.
2. Shoot some harvest bunnies.
3. Skin, paunch, and joint them and reserve the saddles.
4. Pick some beautifully ripe tomatoes - the kind that will fall off the vine if you leave them just a second longer. You can fuss around skinning them, but if they're that ripe they'll probably not want to be skinned.
5. First take some smoky sweet belly bacon in the piece and cut it into nice sized cubes - about 2cm and gently fry it till it starts to take on a little colour. Then softly sweat some onion, and some garlic, along with it in a strong ironware pot, and add if you feel like it some woody herbs-maybe oregano, or thyme, or even rosemary but not all together-just one kind will do. Easy on the rosemary though- it can be strong. A bayleaf is good too. Then put your head over the pot and breathe in deeply. Enjoy.
6. Meanwhile cook the haricots. Don't salt them till they're cooked as this will prevent them from softening. If you like them quite soft then add a teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda at the end of cooking, and this should soften them nicely.
7. Add the bunny joints to the onion, garlic and herbs. If you feel like it add a glass of white wine and just cook till the alcohol has evaporated off, then add some well flavoured very good clear chicken stock (the taste of the final product depends on the freshness and quality of its components). Then pop in your gorgeous garden tomatoes (Marmandes are good, but any deliciously sweet and ripe ones will do).
8. Simmer very slowly on top of the oven if you like but you'll get a better result in a very slow oven - it's slower and more even - for one and a half hours with the lid on.
9. Add your cooked haricots and pop back in the oven with the lid off for half an hour.
10. Remove from oven and finally if you wish add a good wedge of basil roughly julienned, but if you wish to do this, omit the woody herbs apart from the bay and the possible exception of the thyme as long as it was very young and there wasn't a lot of it. (Always read recipes through before trying them out). Serve with warm green beans simply cooked and maybe tossed in vinaigrette and chopped shallots.

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