



JULIA CHILD'S BOEUF BOURGUIGNON

(taken from [ABC news](#), with some adaptation)

Ingredients (serves 6):

- 170g piece of chunk bacon (I honestly had no time to go to a proper butcher, and the supermarkets here only carry sliced bacon, so I was forced to use that. Not ideal!!)
- 1.4l of water
- 3-1/2 tbsp olive oil
- 1.3kg lean stewing beef, cut into 2-inch cubes (again I took the easy way out and bought pre-cubed beef)
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 1 onion, sliced
- Salt and pepper
- 2 tbsp flour
- 3 cups red wine, young and full-bodied (The recipe suggested Beaujolais, Cotes du Rhone or Burgundy. I used Shiraz, more of a medium wine.)
- 0.8l (about 3-1/2 cups) brown beef stock
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 2 cloves garlic, minced and smashed
- 1/2 tsp thyme
- A crumbled bay leaf
- 18 to 24 white pearl onions, outermost thin dry layer removed
- 50g unsalted butter
- Herb bouquet (4 parsley sprigs, one-half bay leaf, one-quarter teaspoon thyme, tied in cheesecloth) or 1 bouquet garni
- 450g mushrooms, fresh and quartered

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 230deg C (450 degF) with rack in the middle of the oven.

First you work with the bacon...

2. Remove bacon rind and set aside. Cut bacon into lardons (0.6cm thick and 4cm long sticks). Simmer rind and lardons for 10 minutes in 1.4 litres of water. Drain and dry. Set aside the rind. Sauté lardons in 1 tbsp of the olive oil in a flameproof casserole over moderate heat for 2 to 3 minutes to brown lightly. Remove to a big side dish with a slotted spoon.

The rind is the skin - the darker, tougher, outer layer of the bacon.

Then the beef..

3. Dry beef in paper towels; it will not brown if it is damp. Heat remaining fat in casserole until almost smoking. Add beef, a few pieces at a time, and sauté until nicely browned on all sides. DO NOT OVERCROWD YOUR BEEF.

This is so important I cannot emphasize it enough - DRY YOUR BEEF. You want your cooked beef to be brown, not gray.

4. Remove beef and add it to the lardons. In the same fat, brown the sliced carrot and onion. Pour out the excess fat. Return the beef and bacon to the casserole and toss with 1/2 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp pepper. Sprinkle the flour over the beef, and toss again to coat the beef lightly. (You should toss it enough that when you're done you don't see streaks or clumps of flour on the beef.)
5. Set casserole uncovered in middle position of preheated oven for 4 minutes. Toss the meat again and return to oven for 4 minutes to brown the flour and cover the meat with a light crust. Remove casserole and turn oven down to 160 degC (325 degF). Shift the rack to the lower third of the oven.
6. Stir in the wine and 0.3-0.7 litres (2 to 3 cups) of beef stock, just enough so that the meat is barely covered. Add the tomato paste, garlic, thyme, bay leaf, and bacon rind. Bring to a simmer on top of the stove. Then cover casserole and set

in lower third of oven. Regulate heat so that liquid simmers very slowly for 3 to 4 hours. The meat is done when a fork pierces it easily.

Then the onions...

7. While the beef is cooking, prepare the onions and mushrooms. Heat 20g of butter with 1-1/2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a skillet until bubbling. Add onions and sauté over moderate heat for about 10 minutes, rolling them so they will brown as evenly as possible. Be careful not to break the onions, and don't expect them to brown uniformly. Add 0.1 litres (1/2 cup) of the stock, salt and pepper to taste, and the herb bouquet. Cover and simmer slowly for 40 to 50 minutes until the onions are perfectly tender but hold their shape, and the liquid has evaporated. Remove herb bouquet and set onions aside.

And the mushrooms...

8. Wipe out the skillet and heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil and 30g of butter over high heat. As soon as you see that the butter has begun to subside, indicating it is hot enough, add the mushrooms. Toss and shake the pan for 4 to 5 minutes. As soon as the mushrooms have begun to brown lightly, remove from heat.

Then you put it altogether...

9. When the meat is tender, remove the casserole from the oven, and pour the contents of the casserole into a sieve set over a saucepan. Wash out the casserole and return the beef and lardons to it. Distribute the cooked onions and mushrooms on top.
10. Skim fat off the sauce in the saucepan. Simmer sauce for a minute or 2, skimming off additional fat as it rises. You should have about 2-1/2 cups of sauce thick enough to coat a spoon lightly. If too thin, boil it down rapidly. If too thick, mix in a few tablespoons stock. Taste carefully for seasoning.

11. Pour 2/3 of the sauce over the meat and vegetables. Cover the casserole, place it on your stove and simmer 2 to 3 minutes, basting the meat and vegetables with the remaining sauce several times.
12. Serve in the casserole, or arrange the stew on a platter surrounded with potatoes, noodles or rice, and decorated with parsley.