



## WINE-COUNTRY BEEF DAUBE

Beef daube is a classic French beef stew made with wine, vegetables and herbs and slowly braised until the beef is meltingly tender and the stewpot is tantalizingly fragrant!

I usually use beef chuck or round, as it can withstand long cooking and still remain in tact. For marinating, I like to use a spicy or peppery young red wine; often I choose a Cotes-du-Rhone from the southern Rhone Valley to honor the origins of the dish. If I am trying to buy American, I opt for a spicy Zinfandel or Petite Sirah.

For the best results, start this dish two or three days ahead and reheat before serving. I usually serve daube in large shallow soup or pasta bowls, either on its own or over wide noodles.

Offer lots of crusty bread to soak up the sauce and follow with a salad of mixed greens.

5 lb	good-quality stewing beef (chuck or round), cut in 2-inch cubes
	Coarse salt
Good handful	fresh sprigs of thyme
Good handful	fresh sprigs of Italian parsley
4	bay leaves
6	thin strips of orange rind (about 2 or 3 inches by 1/2 inch)
1	bottle dry, hearty red wine (such as Cotes-du-Rhone, Zinfandel or Petite Sirah)
2 tbsp	extra-virgin olive oil
6 oz	slab bacon or salt pork, cut in small pieces
2 cups	(approx.) beef stock, preferably homemade
2	large onions, coarsely chopped
5 or 6	cloves of garlic, peeled and left whole
2 tsp	fennel seeds
	Salt and freshly ground pepper
5	carrots, peeled and cut in 1/2-inch rounds
1/2 cup	green olives, such as picholine (optional)
1/4 cup	finely chopped parsley

Wipe the beef with a damp paper towel and pat dry. Place in a large glass or stainless-steel bowl and season all over with salt. Make a bouquet using half the thyme, half the parsley, 2 bay leaves and 3 strips of orange rind. Tie the bundle with kitchen string and add to the bowl. Then add wine, cover with plastic wrap and let marinate 6 to 8 hours or overnight. (If you are marinating this in a cool room, you can keep the bowl out on the counter for several hours; otherwise, marinate in the fridge.) Stir from time to time.

A day before you intend to serve this dish, drain meat by transferring to strainer set over another bowl. Reserve marinade. (If desired, strain marinade through a linen or cotton tea towel set inside your strainer.) Dry the meat by patting it with paper towel and set aside.

In a heavy stewpot or soup pot, heat olive oil until hot. Add bacon or salt pork and cook, stirring, until golden, about 5 minutes. Discard bacon. (If there is an excess of fat in the pan, pour a little of it out.) Add beef and cook over medium-high heat, stirring, until browned all over. (It may take as long as 10 minutes to brown beef thoroughly. Do not crowd pan or beef will not brown properly; if necessary, brown beef in batches.)

Return all beef to pot and add reserved wine marinade, 1 cup of beef stock, onions and garlic. Tie together remaining thyme, parsley, bay leaves and orange rind and add to pot along with fennel seeds. Add salt and pepper to taste and bring to boil, stirring up browned bits from bottom of pan. Reduce heat and cook, partially covered, for about 1 hour, stirring often.

Add carrots and continue cooking for about 1 hour longer or until meat and carrots are tender. Add more beef stock as required. Turn off heat and let daube cool to room temperature. Refrigerate overnight.

Allow to warm to room temperature before reheating. Then add olives, if using, and reheat over low heat. Taste and adjust seasoning. Serve in shallow bowls with a sprinkling of parsley over each serving.

Makes about 6 servings.

Wine suggestion: The wines that you might use to prepare this dish are the same wines you might consider to serve with it. Why not try a stylish Charter Oak Zinfandel or a Judd Petite Syrah? – *Jim White*