

Perfect (Purrfect) Brown Stew

1 ½ to 2 pounds beef chuck or flank, in 1 ½-inch cubes	½ teaspoon pepper
1 ½-inch cube of suet	½ teaspoon paprika
4 cups (1 quart) boiling water	Dash of allspice or cloves
1 teaspoon lemon juice	1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce	6 carrots
1 clove garlic	2 potatoes
1 medium onion, sliced	1 pound (12 to 20) small white onions
2 bay leaves	Frozen green peas, as desired
1 tablespoon salt	¼ cup flour
	Cold water for gravy

Perfect brown stew takes its own time; don't rush it. Brown meat cubes; be sure every piece is a rich, even brown; takes about 20 minutes—IMPORTANT. Begin 3 or 3½ hours before mealtime. Preheat heavy kettle or dutch oven. Toss in suet pulled in bits. Brown meat in hot suet fat. Keep it sizzling. Remember, its the browning that makes the stew. All brown? Then pour in BOILING water. Measure water—don't guess, and never, never shock nicely browned meat with cold water! Lower heat just a trifle, gently shift pieces of meat to be sure they aren't sticking. Add lemon juice—this tenderizes meat and gives a tang. Really, you'll be amazed at the powerful flavor influence of the small measure of lemon juice. It's a tenderizing secret.

Next come seasonings. Add Worcestershire sauce, garlic, sliced onion, and bay leaves. Sprinkle over salt, pepper, paprika, allspice or cloves, and sugar.

Now on with the lid, turn heat low, and let simmer 2 hours. Occasionally scoot meat about to keep it from sticking. Add water if needed. Time up?

Have ready carrots, a couple quartered potatoes, and onions. Now place vegetables in the pot; cover; simmer until vegetables can be easily pierced with fork—about 45 minutes. Add peas, if desired, and cook a few minutes.

Remove vegetables and meat; place in heavy casserole while making perfect brown gravy. Blend flour with cold water to make a smooth paste; add a little more water, stir into stew liquid. Blend thoroughly; cook 5 minutes. Keep stirring. Return meat and vegetables—warm up—STEW-PENDOUS! Serves 6. —Coral Crabill.

Elephant Stew

One elephant (medium size), 1 rabbit (optional). Salt and pepper to taste.

Cut elephant into bite-size pieces. This takes two months. Add enough brown gravy to cover, and cook over kerosene fire at 465° F.

Serves 3800 persons.

For those who do not particularly care for elephant stew the rabbit may be added, but only if necessary. After all, most diners do not like to find a hare in their stew.

—Anonymous.