

2014 N°22.

Beef and Guinness stew.

This is a winter dish, but we've had a few dark damp days lately so let's make the most of them. Cooking time is about 3 hours in total.

Ingredients for 4 people

1 kilo diced stewing steak from James Elliott
4 smoked back bacon rashers cut into small pieces
4 shallots, peeled
12 small carrots trimmed and washed.
1 medium sized onion finely chopped.
3 garlic cloves finely chopped.
1 can of Guinness.
A bunch of fresh thyme.
Cooking oil.
3 tablespoons plain flour
3 teaspoons mustard powder
1 teaspoon each salt and black pepper

What to do. Roughly speaking:

Place the flour, mustard powder, salt and pepper in a large re-sealable plastic bag and shake it up to mix it.

Toss the diced beef in the bag until it's coated with the seasoned flour.

Dry fry the bacon in a large saucepan with a lid, keep it moving to stop it sticking. Take it out and put it to one side. Don't wash the pan. Heat the cooking oil. Fry the finely chopped onion and garlic for a couple of minutes and then drop in the bacon and seasoned beef and fry it until it's browned. You'll have to keep it moving because the flour makes it very sticky.

Pour on the entire can of Guinness, mix well to make sure that the beef isn't sticking to the pan. Then add the shallots and fresh thyme. Bring it to the boil and then turn the heat right down, put on the lid and simmer gently. After an hour, add the washed, trimmed baby carrots. Continue to simmer very gently for another 1 1/2 hours.

Check from time to time to see that it isn't too dry. If it is, add a little more Guinness or water.

Take out the bunch of thyme before serving with mashed potatoes and green beans or broccoli.

About Kay's Essex Road Recipes.

I improvise recipes based on what looks good in my local shops. Living just around the corner from 4 of London's best food shops; **Steve Hatt** the fishmonger, **The Market Garden** greengrocers, **James Elliott** the butcher and **Raab's** Bakery, it's easy to be inspired. Throughout 2014 I plan to share a recipe a week. Once you get the hang of it, you can start to improvise your own menus.

These recipe cards are old school and limited edition; only available on paper in the shops, and in our splendid local pub, **The New Rose**. At the end of the year, though, you'll be able to order a special edition full set of about 50 recipes online via frogandbison.com – check there later in the year for more information.

All recipes are for about 4 people. They're not written for complete beginners; I'm assuming that you know a little bit about cooking so I've been approximate and poetic with measurements, times, weights and instructions. I hope you get the idea, and go on to improvise your own Essex Road recipes.

Most of the other ingredients, including spices and oils, are available from the convenience stores between the New Rose and Raab's. Pasta, risotto rice and really good oils and wines are to be found in **Saponara** on Prebend Street which also serves the best fresh pasta and pizza in the neighbourhood.

If you have any suggestions or comments I'd love to hear them. You can leave them on the facebook page (Kay's Essex Road Recipes) or, in the spirit of the thing, write me a note and leave it in one of the shops. Kay