

Recipe - Glengarry Beef (Or Anything You Want It To Be) Stew From Rachel MacGillivray – Textiles Coordinating Instructor

Cooking with the College VIRTUAL LESSONS



“Remember, cooking is like craft – you learn every time you do something, and a mistake is just a chance to do it differently next time.” – Rachel MacGillivray

This is a very loose recipe for a stew that got me through the lean years as a student and when I was just starting my career - but I still cook it all time because I love it. It’s an old family recipe that isn’t fancy at all but is so tasty-delicious. My family have been farmers for centuries – people without a ton of money or resources, but on a farm, there’s almost always root vegetables and some kind of meat around (and thankfully, these are also pretty cheap things to buy).

My mom always made this with stew beef. It’s a cheaper cut and because it’s simmered for hours, tough, cheap meats will get softened up. You can also get a cheap roast and cut it up – whatever’s on sale! It’s made with very few ingredients, but you can add anything you want. You can also substitute the beef for any other kind of meat that’s on sale or that you like, and instead of using meat you just skip the meat cooking step and add extra veggies. Mushrooms add a good flavour if you’re going veggie, and you can also add in tofu or beans for protein. Once you know the basics it’s very much a “choose your own adventure from what’s in your fridge” kind of meal.

(A few more notes about substitutions at the end.)

INGREDIENTS (For my mom’s version of this stew):

- 1 lb stew beef – cut into 1” cubes (you don’t have to be too picky about this, whatever size you like works), lean or med or whatever is personal preference. Make sure you wash your hands and surfaces well after handling the raw meat.
- 4 large carrots
- 2 medium onions (I use yellow, but you can use whatever you like.)
- Garlic (Optional, I love garlic, so I also often add garlic.)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put a bit of oil in the bottom of a large pot (1 tbsp ish). Turn it onto to med or med-high heat to warm it up.
2. Add beef and “brown.” (Brown: literally means to get the colour from red to brown. Let it cook for a couple of minutes on one side, then turn the blocks of beef onto the other side and let it get brown). You’re not trying to cook the meat all the way through here, you’re giving it some colour

and pulling some flavour out. It's OK if not every part of it is brown. This step shouldn't take too long. Make sure no pieces are stuck to the bottom of the pot.

3. Add enough water to just cover the meat. Put heat up to high and bring water to a boil. Once it's boiling, turn heat down to med-low to simmer. There should be small bubbles, but it's not a rolling boil. Put a lid on the pot and let it simmer for an hour. Check once in a while to make sure it's simmering and that your steam isn't escaping – you don't want the pot to dry out.
4. Meanwhile, you can cut up your veggies. I quarter my onions or cut them in half around the middle, and then quarter them. Big pieces are what you're looking for. Carrots you can wash or peel and cut about a 1/2" thick (or thinner if that's how you like them). If the carrots are really big around, I may cut them in half so they're half moons. Really, you can't go wrong here – however you like your stew, cut your veggies accordingly. I like big chunks, and it's less work. I usually crush a few garlic cloves and chop them up and throw them in.
5. After the meat has simmered for an hour, add your veggies in all at once. Add more water just until the veggies are covered. Turn the heat up to med-high or high again to bring the water to a boil. Once it boils, turn it down to a low simmer (med-low to low heat). Put the cover on and leave for at least 1 more hour. I often leave this simmering on low on the stove for a whole afternoon. I love the smell. I check it every once in a while to make sure the water isn't escaping and add a bit more water if needed. The longer it simmers, the better the flavour and more tender everything is, I think. For seasoning I only add pepper and a pinch of salt, but you can add anything you like (thyme can be nice in it).
6. That's it. If you want to you can make the juices in it into a gravy, or leave them as is. See below for gravy recipe:

GRAVY RECIPE (RACHEL'S WAY)

- I'm pretty hit and miss with gravy but here's how mom tells me to do it: get a glass or bowl and add about 1 cup of water to it. Add in about 2 tbsp of flour and whisk to get out all lumps (I just put the whisk between my hands and roll it, like I'm making a play-dough snake). With the stew on med heat, slowly add this mixture, a little at a time and whisk. Let it bubble for a few minutes and taste it before adding more. Heating up the flour mixture is what makes the gravy thicken, so give it time to heat up. If you add too much flour it might taste a little like flour, so add it a bit at a time. And remember, cooking is like craft – you learn every time you do something, and a mistake is just a chance to do it differently next time. Mom adds "Kitchen Bouquet" to it to darken the gravy, but I rarely do. I know those instructions are really vague (which is prob why I only get it right 1/2 the time), so here are some other instructions for making gravy from Google (and www.thestayathomechef.com.)

GRAVY RECIPE (GOOGLE'S WAY)

- In a medium-size saucepan, melt butter over medium high heat.
- Whisk in flour until well combined and no white specks remain. Let **cook** 2 minutes.
- Slowly pour in broth (juices from your stew) and whisk well.
- Bring to a simmer and heat until thickened to desired consistency, about 2 minutes, whisking constantly.

After it's done, you would then add this back into the stew pot and stir it all up! That's it! If you're into dumplings, this is a great candidate for them!

TIPS & TRICKS

- Because the trick is to at each step add as much water as you need to cover the meat, then the veggies, you can make this stew any size you want, with any ratio of meat & veggies you want. Just, whatever you put in the pot, add water until it's just covered, then simmer. It also freezes really well.

- If you're making it vegetarian, I would sauté the vegetables in oil for a few minutes, before adding the water & simmering – just to bring out the flavours. Or, start with mushrooms sautéed, then bring water to a boil, add all your other veggies and continue. You can also add chickpeas or beans or tofu for more protein. You can also use some veggie broth to add flavour.
- If you're using meat but not beef, still follow the same steps – browning the meat and simmering before you add the veggies.
- Once it's simmering, it's almost zero maintenance – so if you have a lot of things to do around the house, you can just leave it slowly cooking on stove while you do other things, as long as the lid is on the pot!
- A word on potatoes: potatoes are amazing with this stew! My mom never cooks them in the stew though, because they fall apart. So, she cooks them separately and then adds them individually to each bowl. It's really the best, easiest meal to make and it makes a lot so there's always leftovers (we have a big family – big meals are a requisite), and for me, it reminds me of home. I hope you enjoy it and find a way to make it your own. 😊



Source: The South Glengarry Family Style Restaurant