

Cassoulet de Porc et de Mouton

Day 1: Cook the Beans and prepare the pork for roasting.

Cook the Beans:

2 lbs. white haricot beans

4 qts. of rapidly boiling water

Drop the beans into the boiling water. Bring rapidly back to the boil and boil for 2 minutes.

Remove from heat and let the beans soak in the water for 1 hour.

While the beans are soaking, place:

1/2 lb. of pork rind or salt pork rind in a sauce pan and cover with 1 1/2 pints of cold water. (I used a package of "Pork fat back cured with water and salt" and cut off the excess fat) Bring to boil and boil for 1 minute. Drain and rinse in cold water and repeat the process. Then cut the salt pork rind into strips 1/4 inch and then into triangles. Cover again with 1 1/2 pints of cold water and simmer very slowly for 30 minutes. This freshens and softens the rind so that it will lose itself as it cooks with the beans. Set aside.

Place the following in the pan with the soaked beans:

A 1 lb. chunk of fresh unsalted, un-smoked streaky bacon or lean salt pork simmered for 10 minutes in 3 pts. of water.

4 oz. of sliced onions

The rinsed pork rind and its cooking liquid

A bouquet garni - parsley, 2 cloves of garlic, 2 cloves, 1/2 tsp, thyme and 2 bay leaves tied in cheesecloth.

1 tsp. salt if you have not used salt pork.

Bring to simmering point. Skim off any scum that rises. Simmer slowly, uncovered for 1 1/2 hours or until beans are tender. Add boiling water if necessary to keep beans covered with liquid. Season to taste at the end. Leave beans in cooking liquid until ready to use. Then drain and reserve the liquid. Remove the bacon or salt pork and set aside. Discard "Bouquet garni".

The Loin of Pork:

Mix together: 1 tsp. Salt

1/8 tsp. of freshly ground pepper

1/4tsp. of ground thyme or sage

1/8 tsp. ground bay leaf

Pinch of allspice

1/2 clove of mashed garlic.

Rub 2 1/2 lb. loin of pork trimmed of excess fat with the above and place in covered bowl overnight turning several times before roasting.

Day 2: Roast meats

The Loin of Pork:

Pre-heat the oven to 325 degrees. Scrape the marinade off the pork, dry it thoroughly and brown it on all sides in 3 tbsp. of fat or cooking oil. Remove it from the casserole. Pour out all but 2 spoonfuls of the fat. Stir in a sliced onion, 1 sliced carrot, 2 cloves of garlic and a "bouquet garni" (parsley, bay leaf and thyme) and butter if needed. Cover and cook slowly for 5 minutes. Place the meat in the casserole and heat it until sizzling, then place in the lower part of the oven until it reaches a temperature of 175 to 180 degrees, about 2 hours basting 2 or 3 times. Cool and reserve cooking juices. It should render about 1/2 pint of juices.

The Lamb:

2 1/2 lbs. of boned shoulder or leg of lamb trimmed of excess fat
3 to 4 tbsp. of fat or cooking oil
About 1 lb. of cracked lamb bones (also some pork bones may be included.)
1/2 lb. chopped onions

Cut lamb into chunks and dry well. Put fat or oil into large casserole and heat until almost smoking. Brown the meat a few pieces at a time on all sides. Put aside. Brown the bones. Set aside. If fat or oil burn, discard and add another 3 tbsp. Lower heat and brown the onions.

Return bones, and lamb to the casserole and stir in:

4 cloves mashed garlic
5 tbsp. of tomato puree, tomato paste or 4 large tomatoes peeled, seeded and juiced
1/2 tsp ground thyme 2 bay leaves
1 pt. dry white wine or 3/4 pt. of dry white vermouth
1 1/2 pints beef bouillon
1/2 pt of water
Salt and pepper.

Bring to a simmering point on top of the stove and simmer slowly for 1 1/2 hours or put in 325 degree oven for 1 1/2 hours. Remove meat to a dish, discard bones and bay leaves. Skim off fat and correct the seasoning of the cooking liquid.

The sausage:

Different recipes call for different kinds of sausage, but I decided to use a 1 lb. of garlic sausage cooked in a heavy frying pan for about 25 minutes until browned.

Day 3: The final assembly:

2 cups dry white bread crumbs
1/2 cup minced parsley
An 8-quart flameproof casserole
3 tbsp. melted butter

1. Drain the beans, discard herbs and cut salt pork into 1/4 inch slices.
2. Cut the roast pork into 2 inch serving pieces
3. Arrange a layer of beans in the bottom of a casserole
4. Cover with a layer of lamb, pork, salt pork and sausage.
5. Repeat with layers of beans and meat and end with sausage.
6. Pour in the lamb juices, pork juices and bean liquid to cover the top layer of beans.
7. Mix bread crumbs and parsley together, spread over the beans and sausage and dribble on melted butter.

This can be set aside or refrigerated until ready for final cooking.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Bring casserole to simmer on top of the stove, then set in upper third of preheated oven. When the top has crusted lightly (about 20 minutes), turn oven down to 350 degrees. Break the crust into the beans with the back of a spoon and baste with the liquid in the casserole. Repeat several times, but leave the top crust intact for serving. If liquid becomes too thick, add a few spoonfuls of beans cooking juice. The cassoulet should bake for about an hour.