

French Onion Style Beef Stew: The Heartiest One-Pot Comfort Meal

The Ultimate Comfort Fusion: French Onion Beef Stew with Cheesy Bread Topping



OVEN
320°F

TIME
15 min

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INGREDIENTS

For the Beef Stew:

1½ lbs Beef Chuck: Cut into 1-inch cubes. Chuck roast is best for its fat content and tenderness.

5 Large Onions: Yellow or sweet onions work best for caramelizing.

Aromatics: 4 cloves of minced garlic and 1 tablespoon fresh thyme.

Liquid Gold: 2½ cups beef broth, 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce, and 1 tbsp Dijon mustard.

Pantry Staples: Olive oil, unsalted butter, brown sugar, tomato paste, and all-purpose flour.

Seasoning: Coarse sea salt, freshly ground black pepper, and 2 bay leaves.

For the Cheesy Bread Topping:

1 White Baguette: Sliced into thick rounds.

Cheese: 1½ cups shredded Gruyère and 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan.

Extra Flavor: Olive oil for brushing and a bit more Dijon mustard.

Swaps and Notes:

The Beef: If you can't find chuck, brisket or short rib meat are excellent, albeit pricier, alternatives.

The Cheese: Gruyère is traditional, but a sharp Swiss or even a dry Provolone can stand in if needed.

Gluten-Free: Use a 1:1 gluten-free flour blend for the thickening and a GF baguette for the topping.

Wine: For an even deeper flavor, swap $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the beef broth for a dry red wine (like Cabernet or Merlot) to deglaze the pot.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Caramelize the Onions:
2. Sear the Beef:
3. Build the Sauce:
4. The Slow Cook:
5. The Toasted Topping:
6. Assemble and Broil:

Tips for Success:

Don't Rush the Onions: Caramelization is a chemical reaction, not a race. If the onions look like they are burning, add a splash of water.

Individual Crocks: If you don't have oven-safe bowls, you can melt the cheese on the bread on a baking sheet and simply place them on top of the bowls at the table.

Deglazing: If you enjoy the depth of a red wine sauce, check out my [Classic Spaghetti with Homemade Sauce](#) for tips on balancing acidity and richness.

Serving Suggestions and Pairings:

Nutritional Information (Per Serving):

Calories: 540 kcal

Protein: 38g

Carbohydrates: 28g

Fat: 32g

Fiber: 3g

Storage and Leftover Tips:

DIRECTIONS

1. **Caramelize the Onions:** Start by melting the butter in a large Dutch oven. Add your mountain of sliced onions, the brown sugar, and a pinch of salt. Cook these low and slow for about 15 minutes. You aren't just softening them; you want them to reach a deep mahogany color. Stir in the garlic and thyme at the end.
2. **Sear the Beef:** While the onions do their thing, pat your beef dry. This is crucial-wet meat won't brown! Season heavily with salt and pepper. In a separate pan or after removing the onions, sear the beef in olive oil until a dark crust forms on all sides.
3. **Build the Sauce:** Return the beef and onions to the Dutch oven. Sprinkle the flour over the mixture and stir for a minute to cook out the raw flour taste. Stir in the tomato paste, Dijon, and Worcestershire. Slowly pour in the broth, scraping the bottom of the pot to release the "fond" (the tasty brown bits).
4. **The Slow Cook:** Cover the pot and slide it into a preheated 320°F oven. Let it braise for 90 minutes. This turns the tough connective tissue in the beef into literal butter.
5. **The Toasted Topping:** While the stew finishes, toast your baguette slices at 375°F until golden. Spread a little Dijon on each, pile on the Gruyère and Parmesan, and get ready for the finish.
6. **Assemble and Broil:** Ladle the stew into oven-safe bowls. Place a cheesy toast (or two) on top and broil for 2-3 minutes until the cheese is bubbling and slightly charred.
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8. Individual : Crocks: If you don't have oven-safe bowls, you can melt the cheese on the bread on a baking sheet and simply place them on top of the bowls at the table.
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10. Serving Suggestions and Pairings: This stew is a complete meal in itself, but it pairs beautifully with a crisp green salad tossed in a lemon vinaigrette to cut through the richness.
11. For an appetizer to start the night, I highly recommend my Baked Brie Appetizer, which mirrors the gooey, cheesy goodness of the stew's topping.
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17. Storage and Leftover Tips: Fridge: This stew tastes even better the next day! Store the stew (without the bread) in an airtight container for up to 4 days.
18. Freezing: You can freeze the stew base for up to 3 months. Just make fresh cheesy bread when you're ready to eat.
19. Reheating: Reheat on the stovetop over medium heat. If the sauce has thickened too much, add a splash of beef broth.
20. More Recipes You Will Love: If you enjoyed this hearty, oven-baked comfort, you have to try these favorites from the ChefManiac archives:
21. Instant : Pot Lasagna - For when you need comfort food in half the time.
22. 3-Ingredient Chocolate Chip Oatmeal Cookies - The perfect quick dessert after a heavy meal.
23. Final Thoughts: This French Onion Beef Stew is the kind of recipe that turns a house into a home. It's warm, inviting, and technically simple once you master the art of the caramelised onion.
24. I'd love to hear how yours turned out! Did you add wine? Did you use a different cheese? Leave a comment below or tag us on social media! Don't forget to follow ChefManiac for more elevated comfort food recipes every week.

SWAPS & NOTES

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More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/french-onion-style-beef-stew-the-heartiest-one-pot-comfort-meal/>