

Crock Pot Beef Barley Soup Courtesy of MaryAnn Imfeld

Ingredients

1 1/2 to 2 lbs. Beef Chuck cut into cubes (purchase boneless chuck roast, trim and cut into cubes)
1 pkg of Oxtails
soup bones (beef marrow bones are best)*
3 Tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
1 tablespoon butter
1 teaspoon of kosher salt (Diamond Crystal)
vegetables – carrots, celery, potatoes*
3/4 cup pearl barley
1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
Kosher salt (Diamond Crystal)
Freshly ground black pepper
Six black peppercorns
Several sprigs fresh thyme
1 large bay leaf, or 2 small

Preparation

If using beef marrow bones, preheat oven to 400°F. Place bones in a roasting pan and cook for approximately 45 minutes or until browned, but not charred. If they begin to burn, lower temperature to 350°. When done, remove from pan, place pan on burners, add approximately 1 cup of hot water and scrap fond from bottom of pan. Save to add to crock pot.

Season flour with a pinch or two of kosher salt and several grinds of freshly ground pepper. Toss beef cubes and oxtail to coat; shake to remove excess flour.

In a large frying pan, over medium high heat, add butter and oil. When butter begins to foam, add beef in batches to brown, don't overcrowd. Remove to separate dish and continue until done. Add more oil and butter as needed.

Add beef cubes, oxtails, marrow bones and liquid from roasting pan to crock pot. Make a sachet with cheesecloth (or metal tea strainer) of peppercorns, bay leaf and fresh thyme to add to pot. Cover with water; add 1 teaspoon kosher salt. Cook in crock pot on low setting for six hours. As the stock cooks, skim scum from surface.

In the meantime, chop your vegetables and set aside in refrigerator. Keep covered to retain moisture.

After six hours, remove meat and bones. Shredded beef and pick meat from oxtails. Keep meat separate stock, chill overnight. The next day, remove fat from surface then add meat, vegetables, crushed tomatoes and barley. Cook for 1 to 2 hours or until barley is tender. As it cooks, taste and adjust salt and pepper,

*The first time I made this recipe, I didn't use beef marrow bones. For vegetables just chopped celery and carrots.