

Rich Beef Stew with Pomegranates

As with [this stew](#), the sauce all hangs on your good, quality broth. If it's beautifully gelatinous, you will be rewarded with a wonderful glossy, coating consistency without the need for a thickener. My preferred method by far!

(serves 4)

2+1/4 lb / 1 kg boneless grass-fed beef chuck steak, cut into
1+1/2 inch cubes
1 tbsp solid fat (lard)
2 large red onions, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp [cinnamon](#)
1 tsp [dried oregano](#)
1 tsp [dried thyme](#)
1 large [bay leaf](#)
3/4 pt unsweetened pure pomegranate juice
1/2 pt good gelatinous broth
1 tbsp [maple syrup](#) *
pinch [sea salt](#) or to taste
seeds of 1 pomegranate **
chopped flat-leafed parsley to garnish



Preheat oven to 300°F / 150°C

For tips on successful browning, please refer to [this post](#).

If you buy nicely marbled meat, there should be no need to put fat in the pan before you sear, however feel free to add some solid fat if you think it necessary.

Heat a large heavy based lidded casserole ([Dutch oven](#)). Brown the meat in batches (see above), removing with a slotted spoon or tongs onto a plate and set to one side. Once the meat is browned and removed, add the tbsp of fat and then the onions to the casserole. Turn the heat right down and sweat the onions for 6-8 minutes or so until translucent. If, at any point, your pan is a little over brown and parched, a tbsp water will help release the sediment, so quickly scrape it off and incorporate into the onions before the moisture is evaporated.

When the onions are nice and soft, add the garlic and cook another minute or two. Don't allow the garlic to burn. Now stir in the cinnamon and herbs and cook one more minute. Pour in the pomegranate juice, stirring the sediment from the bottom of the pan into the mixture, followed by the broth and the browned meat. Make sure the meat is covered by the liquid. Turn the heat up, bring the stew to a simmer, put the lid on and place into the oven.

Cook for 2+1/2 hours, or until the meat is beautifully tender. Check it mid way to make sure it isn't drying out at all. Remove the meat with a slotted spoon (or set a colander over a large bowl and strain the mixture that way) and put the liquor back on the heat, adding the maple syrup. Bring it up to the boil and reduce by half until thickened and glossy. Add salt to taste. Return the meat to the pan and stir well to incorporate. Serve with the pomegranate seeds and parsley on top.

* GAPS/SCD : Omit maple syrup, or substitute with honey.

* Separating the seeds from a pomegranate doesn't need to be time consuming or messy if you follow these simple instructions. Using a serrated knife, score the outer skin of your pomegranate into four quarters, ensuring you don't pierce the flesh inside or the seeds may be punctured. Fill a large bowl with water, submerge the pomegranate and, using your thumbs, prise open the fruit firmly but carefully into four segments. As you help the seeds to fall out of their casings, they will fall to the bottom of the bowl and any pith that comes away will float to the top. Scoop the rind and pith out of the bowl and discard. Pour the contents of the bowl into a sieve to collect the seeds.