

SIX-HOUR SHIN OF BEEF (serves six)

The shin of an animal does an incredible amount of work, and as a result has to be cooked long and slow until melting and tender. After cooking it for five hours or thereabouts, what you get in return is the most sticky, melting meat and all the intense goodness that comes out of the bone. Feel free to experiment with red wine and other interesting root veg like swede or turnips.

3kg (6lb 8oz) shin of beef (on the bone if poss)

olive oil

6 thick rashers of streaky bacon

3 red onions, peeled and quartered

4 cloves of garlic, peeled

a small bunch of fresh thyme

a small bunch of fresh rosemary

4 bay leaves

4 large potatoes, peeled and cut into quarters

1/2 celeriac, peeled and cut into very large chunks

6 large carrots, peeled and halved

3 parsnips, peeled and halved a bottle of white wine

Preheat your oven to 170°C/325°F/gas mark 3. Heat a very large casserole dish or a deep roasting tray on the hob. Season your shin well with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper and fry it in a couple of good glugs of olive oil until brown all over. Add the bacon, onions and garlic and fry for a further five minutes.

Throw in the herb sprigs, bay leaves and the remaining vegetables. Pour in the wine, refill the bottle with water and pour that in, too. Bring the whole lot to the boil. Now get a damp piece of greaseproof paper, oil it on one side and drape it over the dish, oil-side down, so it touches the surface. Cover tightly with a lid - if you have one that fits your dish -or with foil, and place in the preheated oven for five to six hours until you can push a knife into it and it feels like butter and the meat falls easily away from the bone.

Shred the meat off the bone with your fingers or a fork, discarding any large pieces of fat and any woody herb stalks. Mix the meat and the veg and serve in the middle of the table with some lovely crusty bread.