

TIME: 3.5 hrs**SERVING:** 4 people

INGREDIENTS:

900g stewing venison
2 tablespoons flour
Sea salt
Freshly-ground black pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil
50g smoked streaky bacon cut into lardons
12 –16 peeled shallots (or six peeled banana shallots)
75g button mushrooms quartered
50g butter
Dash of brandy
two-thirds of a bottle of good red wine
4 to 6 peeled and crushed garlic cloves
250ml beef stock or 250ml water and a tablespoon of Marmite
Bouquet garni of bay leaves, thyme and parsley



Spread the flour on a baking sheet and bake in a moderate oven for nine to ten minutes or until lightly coloured. Mix in plenty of salt and pepper. In a large frying pan or flame-proof casserole dish heat the olive oil and brown the lardons for a few minutes, then add the shallots and continue to cook until they have taken on some colour. Cut the meat into large chunks, roll in the seasoned flour and add to the pan one at a time, turning for about 10 minutes to brown on all sides. Meanwhile tip the wine into a saucepan, place over a high heat and reduce by one-third. Throw the brandy into the pan with the meat and flame to burn off the alcohol, then add the reduced wine, the bouquet garni, the garlic and the stock - or Marmite and water. Finally sauté the mushrooms in the butter and add them as well. Cover and simmer very gently for an hour and a half or place in an oven at 180C gas mark 4 for two hours. Remove the lid for the last 20 minutes of cooking to allow the sauce to thicken.

Enjoy! Malcolm & Julie Pyne

YOUR NOTES: