

Bigos (Polish Hunter's Stew)

Before I went vegetarian, I made Polish Hunter's Stew a few times a year. Here is the basic traditional recipe I used that may be augmented to suit your liking:

-2lbs. sauerkraut, rinsed & replace juice with water

-1/2lb bacon

1/2lb veal (or lamb), cubed

1/2lb venison (wild game), cubed

1/2lb Polish sausage pieces

1/2lb pork, cubed

(Oxtails make an excellent substitution meat if you can't find veal or lamb; remove meat from the bones after browning).

1/2lb small cabbage, sliced

1-2 dried oyster mushrooms

2 yellow onions, chopped

3/4lb fresh mushrooms, sliced

3 small tomatoes, sliced

1 bay leaf

2 large Granny Smith apples, diced

1 Tbsp caraway seed

1/3 cup white wine

butter

salt/pepper/sugar to taste

water as needed for desired consistency

To a crock pot add kraut with water. Bring to boil, then simmer. Brown cubed meats using bacon. Add all the meat and cabbage to pot.

Rehydrate mushrooms in 1/2 water, dice and add to pot with the water they were soaked in. Saute onions and fresh mushrooms in butter until not quite done, then add to pot. Add bay leaf, apples, tomatoes and caraway seed. Simmer 3-4hrs. 1/2 before serving, add wine, salt, pepper, sugar as desired; stir. Add water if too thick.

This stew lends itself to the sweet side; never salty or vinegary (rinse the sauerkraut). Service with hard crusted rye bread and enjoy.

Recipe corrections.

1/2 of a whole small cabbage

1/2 cup of water to soak mushrooms

Clarification: your crock pot will likely be filled to the brim with all the raw cabbage but it will reduce down nicely in a few hours.