

Important Note: This is a great recipe to feed the family on a cold spring day. This dish takes a while, so it's best to start it the day before or you'll be eating very late starting with cooking the meat. The veggies and farro can be added the next day.

Background: We love hardy stews that feed the family. The addition of farro gives this stew an Italian twist. Farro is an ancient grain similar to wheat and is comprised of three different "varieties", which are actually three different types of grain. This nutrient dense food supposedly fed the Roman armies on their conquests.

Beef & Spring Vegetable Stew with Farro

Serves 6

Ingredients:

4 sprigs oregano

4 sprigs thyme

2 sprigs rosemary

4 sage leaves

1/4 cup olive oil

2 lbs. beef chuck, cut into 1" pieces

Salt & pepper

8-10 oz. pearl onions, peeled

6 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

2 tbsp balsamic vinegar

1 cup dry red wine

6 cups beef broth

1 cup semi-pearled farro

1 large parsnip, skinned and diced into bite sized pieces

2 large carrots, skinned and diced into bite sized pieces

1 bunch asparagus, trimmed, cut into small pieces

1 cups peas

Shaved parmesan cheese for serving

Arugula for serving (optional)

Method:

Tie together, or wrap with cheese cloth, the oregano, thyme, rosemary, and sage leaves.

Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in a large heavy pot, like a Dutch oven, over medium-high heat. Add the cubed beef and season with salt and pepper, making sure not to crowd the pot. Work in batches if necessary. Cook, mixing occasionally, until browned, about 12-15 minutes. Once finished transfer to a plate.

Add the pearl onions to the pot, season with salt and pepper, and stir to coat. Cook the onions until they start to brown and soften, about 6 minutes. Remove and transfer to a plate.

Add the garlic and cook 30 seconds, then add the balsamic vinegar and give it a quick stir.

Add wine and deglaze the pot. Bring to a boil and cook until the sauce had reduced by about one-fourth, about 5 minutes. Add broth, beef, and herb bundle. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer gently, partially covered, until the beef is tender, about 90 minutes.

(If you're splitting this into two night, now is the time to stop. Make sure to bring the stew to a simmer again before progressing to the next step).

Stir in farro and cook until nearly al dente, about 15–20 minutes. Remove the herb bundle and add the parsnip, carrots, and onions. Cook until farro is cooked through, parsnips and carrots are tender, and beef is almost falling apart, about 30 minutes. Mix in asparagus and peas and cook until crisp and not too tender, 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve drizzled with oil and topped with arugula and shaved parmesan cheese.