BRISKET BOURGUIGNON

Meat, Gluten-free, Passover • Serves 10 to 12

This recipe is inspired by Julia Child’s famous beef bourguignon recipe, which is featured in the film Julie and Julia. In that movie, Julia’s story is also my story: I was living in Europe with a diplomat husband and thought, “Why not? I’ll go to cooking school.” Then I started teaching cooking classes in my small European apartment, as Julia did. I came to book writing later, and, like Julia, it took some time to get that first book published. Even now, when I recall the scene in the film when she pulls the published book out of its packaging, I just want to cry for joy.

PREP TIME: 10 minutes • COOK TIME: 3 hours • ADVANCE PREP: May be made 3 days in advance or frozen

• EQUIPMENT: Paper towels, measuring cups and spoons, cutting board(s), knife, vegetable peeler, garlic press, large Dutch oven, tongs, plate, large roasting pan, aluminum foil, colander, carving knife, small saucepan, medium frying pan or saucepan, medium bowl, silicone spatula, fork

BRISKET

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided

3 tablespoons potato starch

5 pounds second-cut brisket, rinsed and dried very well with paper towels

3 carrots, peeled and sliced

2 onions, halved and cut into ½-inch (12-mm) slices

2 medium tomatoes, seeds removed and chopped into 1-inch (2.5-cm) pieces

3 cloves garlic, crushed

1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves

2 bay leaves

1 bottle (750 ml) dry red wine

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon black pepper

ONIONS AND MUSHROOMS

8 to 10 ounces (225 to 280g) pearl onions

8 to 10 ounces (225 to 280g) button mushrooms

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided

1 tablespoon finely chopped Italian flat parsley

Pinch salt

• Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Sprinkle potato starch on both sides of the meat, shaking off any excess, and brown the meat in the pan on both sides until you see crispy parts on the meat, after about 8 minutes. Using a fork, transfer the meat to a plate.

• Reduce the heat to medium. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil, carrots, and onions to the Dutch oven and cook them for 8 minutes over medium heat, stirring often. Add the tomatoes, garlic, thyme, and bay leaves and cook for 2 minutes. Place the meat in a large roasting pan. Add the wine and bring the mixture to a boil. Add the salt and pepper. Cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil and bake the meat in the oven for 1½ hours.

• While the meat is cooking, prepare the pearl onions and mushrooms. Bring a small saucepan of water to a boil. Add the onions and cook them for 2 minutes. Drain off the water, and when the onions are cool enough the handle, snip off the ends and press the onions out of their skins.

• Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a medium frying or saucepan over medium heat. Cook the onions until they’re browned on all sides, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer the onions to a medium bowl. Add another tablespoon of oil to the pan and cook the mushrooms over medium-high heat for about 5 minutes, or until browned, stirring often. Add a pinch of salt. Add the mushrooms to the bowl with the onions.

• Remove the roasting pan from the oven and place the meat on a cutting board. Using a carving knife, slice it against the grain to make thin slices. Reduce the heat to 350°F (180°C). Return the slices to the pan and immerse them in the liquid. Cover and bake the meat for another hour. Add the mushrooms and onions to the sauce. Cover the pan and return it to the oven. Bake the meat, covered, for another half hour or longer, until it is soft when pierced with a fork. Taste the sauce and add salt and pepper, if needed. Sprinkle the meat with parsley and serve.

Searing Meat:

Searing intensifies the flavor of meat. The moisture on the surface of the meat evaporates, and the creation of a caramelized crust results in more flavor compounds. After you place the meat into the hot pan, wait until the meat releases from the pan on its own, and then turn it over to sear the other side.