

Makes 5 meals for 2 people

2hrs 30 mins cooking time

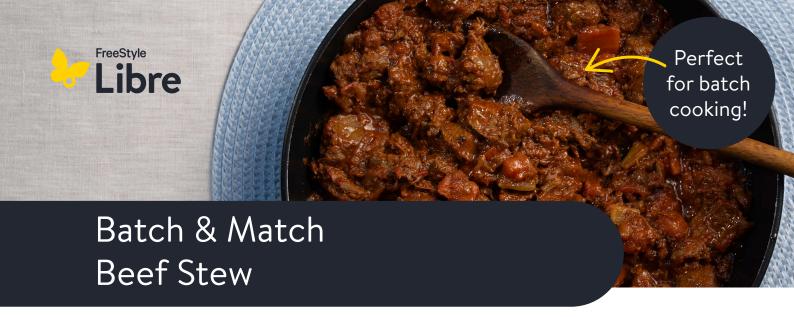
This hearty beef stew is your flexible flavour base – batch cook now, and transform it into a rich Beef Ragu, a spicy Chilli con Carne, and a comforting Beef Curry.

This stew is large enough to divide into five portions of approximately 300g (10% oz); each will feed two. It is perfect for batch cooking and dividing to make frozen meals for another day. It is great for using economical cuts such as chuck or skirt and works just as well with lamb too. We love it with a delicious, zingy gremolata (chopped parsley and lemon zest) on top.

Although the base flavours are Mediterranean, the stew can be turned into a cheat's Chilli Con Carne or Beef Curry at a later date. Add lentils, beans mushrooms or swede to make the stew go further.







INGREDIENTS

tomatoes

25g (1oz) butter
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 onion, roughly chopped
3 celery sticks, roughly chopped
2 large carrots, roughly chopped
1.2kg (2lb 6oz) stewing beef or lamb
10g (¼oz) rosemary needles, stems discarded

1-2 teaspoons salt and plenty of pepper 300ml (10fl oz) red wine 2 tablespoons tomato purée 2 × 400g (14oz) cans Italian plum

6 broad sage leaves, approx. 5g/1/8oz

METHOD

- Melt the butter in the oil in a heavy-based casserole over a medium heat.
- 2. Add the onion and fry gently for 10 minutes, or until soft.
- 3. Add the meat and brown all over for around 20 minutes, turning regularly, over a high heat, or until the liquid from the meat has evaporated.
- 4. Now make a little pile of the herbs and salt and use a large knife to chop them together. This is called a battuto and it should be a finely chopped mixture.
- 5. Add this to the pan and stir through before pouring in the wine. Let it bubble for a few minutes to lose the strong taste of alcohol.
- Add the tomato purée and stir through before adding the tomatoes.
- 7. Bring the stew to the boil and bash the tomatoes up with a wooden spoon to break them up.
- 8. Turn the heat down to a simmer, put a lid on, ajar, and cook for 1%-2 hours, or until the sauce has reduced and the meat is very tender. Add a little hot water if looks dry at any stage. If the stew is very watery, remove the lid completely and let the water evaporate as it bubbles.



