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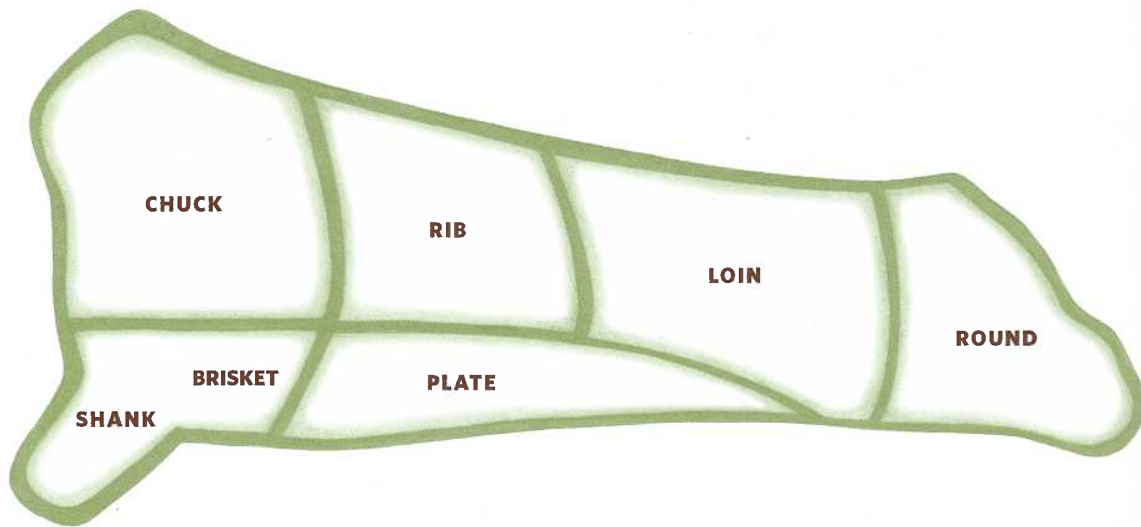
PURE BEEF



AN ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO
ARTISAN MEAT
WITH
RECIPES FOR EVERY CUT

LYNNE CURRY

PURE BEEF CUT GUIDE



CHUCK

Cuts for braising (chapter 5, page 100); slow roasting or smoking (chapter 8, page 197); simmering (chapter 9, page 224); or in charcuterie (chapter 10, page 251). In addition, Shoulder Tender and Top Blade Steaks are suited to grilling or pan searing (chapter 7, page 162)



CHUCK ROAST
(BONE-IN)



CHUCK ROAST
(BONELESS)



SHORT RIBS
(BONELESS)



SHOULDER TENDER



TOP BLADE STEAK



ARM POT ROAST



CROSS RIB ROAST



STEW BEEF



GROUND BEEF*

RIB

Cuts for roasting (chapter 8, page 197) or grilling or pan searing (chapter 7, page 162).



RIB ROAST
(BONE-IN)



RIB STEAK
(BONE-IN)



RIB STEAK
(BONELESS)



RIB-EYE ROAST



BACK RIBS

*for all ground beef preparations see chapter 4 (page 68) and chapter 10 (page 251)

LOIN

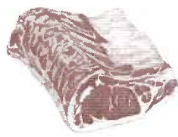
Cuts for quick cooking (chapter 6, page 132); roasting (chapter 8, page 197); or grilling or pan searing (chapter 7, page 162).



STRIP LOIN STEAK
(BONE-IN)



STRIP LOIN STEAK
(BONELESS)



STRIP LOIN ROAST



T-BONE STEAK



TENDERLOIN STEAK
(FILET MIGNON)



TENDERLOIN



SIRLOIN CAP
(CULOTTE)



TOP SIRLOIN
STEAK



FLANK STEAK



SIRLOIN FLAP
(BAVETTE)



TRI-TIP ROAST



TOP SIRLOIN
ROAST

ROUND

Cuts for quick cooking (chapter 6, page 132); or roasting (chapter 8, page 197); or charcuterie (chapter 10, page 251).



TOP ROUND STEAK



TOP ROUND ROAST



EYE ROUND



CUBE STEAK



GROUND BEEF*



SIRLOIN TIP
STEAK



SIRLOIN TIP
ROAST



TOP ROUND
ROAST

SHANK

Cuts for braising (chapter 5, page 100) or simmering (chapter 9, page 224).



SHANK



MARROW BONES



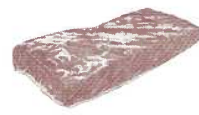
STEW BEEF (ALSO FROM OTHER PRIMALS)

BRISKET

Cuts for braising (chapter 5, page 100); slow roasting or smoking (chapter 8, page 197); simmering (chapter 9, page 224); or in charcuterie (chapter 10, page 251).



BRISKET (POINT)



BRISKET (FLAT)

PLATE

Cuts for braising (chapter 5, page 100) or in charcuterie (chapter 10, page 251).



SHORT RIBS



STEW BEEF



GROUND BEEF*

Cuts for quick cooking (chapter 6, page 132) or grilling or pan searing (chapter 7, page 162).



SKIRT STEAK



HANGER STEAK

REAL TAMALES PIE

For several years, I hosted a tamale party once a year and my canning and gardening friends joined in the labors. We learned why Mexican families make tamales only at holiday time. Individual tamales are labor intensive. Since my family loves them, I looked for a speedier way, and the result was this pie.

Made with a masa harina crust you shape with your hands, this pie contains a mild ground beef filling chunky with squash, pinto beans, and the sweet surprise of golden raisins. (If using dried beans, you'll need to cook them in advance.) The crust bakes up tender and light, a wonderful switch from the standard cornbread topping. Serve this pie for a carefree dinner with friends accompanied by sour cream, avocado wedges, and salsa, such as Roasted Corn Salsa (page 175).

Makes 8 servings

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DOUGH:

2 CUPS (10 OUNCES) MASA HARINA
1 TEASPOON BAKING POWDER
 $\frac{3}{4}$ TEASPOON SALT
1½ CUPS LOW-SALT BEEF STOCK (SHORT ORDER STOCK, PAGE 226; ROASTED BEEF STOCK, PAGE 228), CHICKEN STOCK, OR WATER
 $\frac{2}{3}$ CUP (4½ OUNCES) LARD OR VEGETABLE SHORTENING

FILLING:

1 TABLESPOON VEGETABLE OIL
1 MEDIUM ONION, CHOPPED
1 POBLANO OR GREEN PEPPER, SEEDED AND CHOPPED
1½ POUNDS GROUND BEEF, 85 TO 90 PERCENT LEAN
2¼ TEASPOONS SALT
1½ TEASPOONS GROUND CUMIN
1 TEASPOON DRIED OREGANO, PREFERABLY MEXICAN
½ TEASPOON GROUND CINNAMON
¼ TEASPOON CHILE POWDER
2 GARLIC CLOVES, MINCED
1 (14-OUNCE) CAN DICED TOMATOES WITH THEIR JUICE
½ POUND SMALL CHAYOTE OR ZUCCHINI SQUASH, CHOPPED
1½ CUP COOKED PINTO BEANS OR 1 (15-OUNCE) CAN PINTO BEANS, DRAINED AND RINSED
½ CUP GOLDEN RAISINS, CHOPPED

For the dough, mix the masa harina, baking powder, and salt in a large mixing bowl. Heat the stock in a pot over medium-high heat until warm. Mix it into the dry ingredients with a fork to make a soft dough. Beat the lard in a standing mixer with the paddle attachment on high speed until smooth and light, about 2 minutes. Add the masa dough and beat on medium speed for 5 minutes to make a thick, fluffy, and tacky dough. Cover the dough with plastic wrap and let it rest at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the pie filling. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion turns translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the ground beef, salt, cumin, oregano, cinnamon, and chile powder. Cook, breaking up the ground beef into small clusters, until it turns brown. Add the garlic and tomatoes and reduce the heat to low. Simmer until it is as thick as chili, about 5 minutes. Stir in the chayote, pinto beans, and raisins and set aside to cool slightly.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Spoon the ground beef mixture into a 13 x 9-inch baking dish. Dampen your hands and press the masa onto a piece of wax paper or plastic wrap into a rectangle roughly 13 x 9 inches. Flip it over on top of the pie filling and peel off the paper or plastic. Use your fingers to pinch the crust to the edges and patch any cracks. Bake the pie until the masa dough is springy to the touch in the center and looks dry on the surface, 25 to 30 minutes. Cool for 15 minutes on a wire rack before cutting into serving pieces.

BOLOGNESE MEAT SAUCE

For me, there is no better partner for pasta than this decadent and thick Italian meat sauce. It's really a stew of ground beef braised in wine, milk, and beef stock. A touch of porcini mushrooms highlights the earthy flavors of the beef, especially grassfed. Boiled spaghetti, tagliatelle, or bucatini, which is hollow, all handle this substantial sauce well. Serve any of them showered with freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano. For two gluten-free options, try spaghetti squash described in the variation or the make-ahead Polenta Torta (recipe follows).

Makes 4 cups

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- 1 OUNCE DRIED PORCINI MUSHROOMS
- 3 TABLESPOONS EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- 2 OUNCES PANCETTA OR BACON, FINELY CHOPPED
(ABOUT ½ CUP)
- 1 MEDIUM ONION, FINELY CHOPPED
- 1 CARROT, FINELY CHOPPED
- 1 CELERY STALK, FINELY CHOPPED
- 1 POUND GROUND BEEF, 85 TO 90 PERCENT LEAN
- ¼ TEASPOON RED PEPPER FLAKES
- 3 GARLIC CLOVES, MINCED
- 1¼ TEASPOONS SALT
- ⅛ TEASPOON BLACK PEPPER
- 2 TABLESPOONS TOMATO PASTE
- ½ CUP DRY WHITE WINE
- ¾ CUP WHOLE MILK
- 1 CUP LOW-SALT BEEF STOCK (SHORT ORDER
STOCK, PAGE 226; ROASTED BEEF STOCK,
PAGE 228) OR WATER

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Bring a teakettle of water to a boil. Put the dried mushrooms in a small bowl, cover with 1 cup boiling water, and let them soak for 20 minutes. Drain the mushrooms, reserving the soaking liquid, and chop them finely. Strain the soaking liquid and set it aside.

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the chopped mushrooms, pancetta, onion, carrot, and celery and cook until the pancetta and vegetables begin to brown, stirring occasionally, about 12 minutes. Add the ground beef, pepper flakes, garlic, salt, and pepper and cook, breaking up the ground beef with a wooden spoon, until it changes color, about 5 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste and cook, stirring occasionally, until the meat begins to brown in the bottom of the pan, about 12 minutes.

Reduce the heat to low, pour in the wine, milk, stock, and the reserved mushroom soaking liquid. Use the spoon to scrape the bottom of the pan clean. Simmer the sauce partially covered until it is very thick, 1½ to 1¾ hours.

NOTE: When tossing this sauce with pasta, reserve ¼ cup of the pasta cooking water to splash in if it seems too dry or “tight.”

VARIATION: SPAGHETTI SQUASH BOLOGNESE

While the Bolognese is simmering, split, seed, and microwave a medium spaghetti squash (about 3 pounds) one half at a time for 12 minutes on high heat or bake cut side down on a baking sheet at 350°F until you can pierce it with a fork, about 1 hour. Use a fork to scrape the flesh into long strands into a medium mixing bowl. While it's still warm, toss it with 2 tablespoons of unsalted butter or olive oil and serve it in place of pasta topped with the Bolognese Meat Sauce.



TOMATO-BRAISED BEEF CHEEKS

with Wilted Spinach and Oven Polenta

“What do you want with beef cheeks when there are plenty of perfectly good cuts?” my butcher Kevin teased me. It’s true that cheeks are the most overworked cow muscle there is. Once braised, they are fine-grained and rich, which makes them worth seeking out. I’ve savored these nuggets of beef—like mini-pot roasts—in restaurants, so I had to try them at home.

This recipe is remarkable for more than using an unusual beef cut. Instead of the classic braising technique, you simmer the cheeks first until they are nearly melting and then brown them under the broiler, giving them a burnished, almost crisp finish on the outside. The creamy Oven Polenta (recipe follows) bakes in the oven alongside the beef, and the spinach cooks while they broil. Serve this in pasta bowls to eat all together with soup spoons.

Makes 4 servings

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4 BEEF CHEEKS (ABOUT 2 POUNDS)

KOSHER SALT

3 TABLESPOONS EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, DIVIDED

1 MEDIUM ONION, CHOPPED

2 GARLIC CLOVES, MINCED

¼ TEASPOON RED PEPPER FLAKES

2 TABLESPOONS TOMATO PASTE

¾ CUP LOW-SALT BEEF STOCK (SHORT ORDER

STOCK, PAGE 226; ROASTED BEEF STOCK, PAGE 228) OR WATER

¼ CUP BALSAMIC VINEGAR

1 (14-OUNCE) CAN CRUSHED TOMATOES, DRAINED

¼ TEASPOON GROUND FENNEL SEEDS

1 BAY LEAF

½ TEASPOON BLACK PEPPER

12 OUNCES FRESH SPINACH, STEMMED AND
ROUGHLY CHOPPED (ABOUT 8 CUPS)

CONTINUES

Trim the membranes from the exterior of the beef cheeks with a flexible, thin-bladed knife, leaving intact the seam of collagen inside the meat. Pat the cheeks dry and season them liberally with the kosher salt on both sides. Preheat the oven to 300°F.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a medium Dutch oven over medium heat and cook the onion until it turns translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and pepper flakes and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the tomato paste and spread it around the pan. Cook until it darkens in color, about 2 minutes. Stir in the stock, vinegar, tomatoes, fennel seeds, bay leaf, and black pepper and bring to a simmer. Nestle the beef cheeks into the sauce in a single layer. Cover and braise in the oven for 3 to 3½ hours.

When the beef pulls apart readily with a fork, remove the pot from the oven and turn the broiler on high. Transfer the beef cheeks from the braising liquid into a small skillet greased with the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Broil, watching closely, until the beef cheeks are nearly blackened on the surface, about 3 minutes.

To cook the spinach, bring the tomato braising sauce to simmer over medium-low heat. Spoon off any pools of fat. Add the spinach and stir it into the sauce. Cover and cook until wilted. Taste for seasoning and discard the bay leaf. Serve each beef cheek over the spinach, sauce, and the polenta, if using, in warmed wide bowls.

OVEN POLENTA

Start making this before you begin the Tomato-Braised Beef Cheeks with Spinach (page 113), or any other braise or stew. It cooks alongside and will wait for hours kept warm in a low oven.

Makes 4 servings

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1 CUP POLENTA

½ TEASPOON SALT

2 TABLESPOONS UNSALTED BUTTER

1 CUP FINELY GRATED PARMESAN CHEESE

Preheat the oven to 300°F with the rack positioned in the lower half of the oven. Bring 3 cups of water to a boil over high heat. Place the polenta and salt in a 2-quart oven-safe casserole dish and whisk in 1 cup of cool water until smooth. Whisk in the boiling water until the polenta is smooth. Cover the dish with a tight-fitting lid or aluminum foil and place in the oven to cook for 1½ to 2 hours, stirring every 30 minutes. When the polenta is swelled, glossy, and pulls away from the sides of the pan when stirred, remove it from the oven and stir in the butter and Parmesan. Cover and keep warm until ready to serve.

MORE CHOICE CUTS:

Boneless short ribs, rich in collagen like beef cheeks, are superb in this braise. Check them for doneness after 2½ hours of braising and spoon off any excess fat from the tomato sauce before cooking the spinach.

Meaty beef shank is also excellent if you're game to eat around the bone and they braise in about 2 hours.



TOMATO-BRAISED BEEF CHEEKS WITH WILTED SPINACH AND OVEN POLENTA (PAGE 113)

BASQUE CUTLETS BAKED IN RED PEPPER SAUCE

If you've been tempted to try tongue but cold and pickled doesn't appeal to you, this is the just the recipe. The first time I tried it at Epi's Basque restaurant near Boise, Idaho, I became a convert: the thin fried tongue cutlets surprised me with their beefy flavors and were delightful in the mild red pepper-tomato sauce. At Epi's, this dish is served with steamed long-grain white rice.

This recipe, adapted from Epi's original, has three steps: simmering the tongue, making the sauce, and frying the cutlets. You can prepare the tongue and the sauce up to two days in advance, then cook the cutlets and reheat the sauce on the day you plan to serve it.

Don't skip this distinctive recipe if you don't want or can't get beef tongue. Instead, substitute one of the suitable cuts suggested below, and you can jump right into making the sauce and frying the beef.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

TONGUE:

- 1 (2½- TO 3-POUND) BEEF TONGUE, RINSED
- 4 CELERY STALKS, CUT INTO 4-INCH SECTIONS
- 1 MEDIUM ONION, PEELED AND QUARTERED
- 5 GARLIC CLOVES, PEELED
- 1 BAY LEAF
- 1 CUP (4½ OUNCES) ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- 2½ TEASPOONS SALT
- ½ TEASPOON BLACK PEPPER
- 4 EGGS
- 1½ CUPS COARSE, DRY BREADCRUMBS
- 1 CUP VEGETABLE OIL

SAUCE:

- 10 DRIED CHORICERO OR RED ANAHEIM CHILE PEPPERS, STEMMED
- 1 TABLESPOON OLIVE OIL
- 3 GARLIC CLOVES, MINCED
- 1 SMALL ONION, FINELY CHOPPED
- ⅓ CUP TOMATO PASTE
- 2½ CUPS FRESH OR CANNED TOMATO PURÉE
- ¼ TEASPOON RED PEPPER FLAKES
- 1½ TEASPOONS SUGAR
- 1 TEASPOON SALT
- ¼ CUP LIGHTLY PACKED CHOPPED FRESH PARSLEY

To cook the tongue, place it in a large stockpot with the celery, onion, garlic, and bay leaf. Add enough water to cover the tongue completely and bring it to a boil over medium-high heat. Partially cover the pan, and reduce the heat to low, keeping the meat completely submerged, until you can pierce it easily all the way through with a skewer, 3½ to 4 hours. Cool the tongue in the cooking liquid until it is cool enough to handle. Peel off the skin while the tongue is still warm and trim off any fat and gristle. Cover and refrigerate until it is cold so that it is easier to slice thinly. Discard the cooking liquid.

Meanwhile, make the sauce. Put the chiles in a medium saucepan, cover with water, and bring it to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to low and simmer partially covered, for 45 minutes. Drain the chiles and pass them through a food mill into a medium-sized bowl and set it aside.

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat, add the garlic, and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the onion and cook until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the tomato paste, tomato purée, pepper flakes, sugar, salt, the reserved chiles, and 1 cup of water. Bring to a boil and simmer steadily for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until thick. Taste the sauce for salt and keep it warm over low heat.

To fry the beef cutlets, cut the chilled beef tongue crosswise into slices ¼ inch thick. (Save any

pieces too small for frying, chop finely, and add them to the sauce.) Put the flour into a wide, shallow dish and whisk in the salt and pepper. In another wide, shallow dish, beat the eggs, and place the breadcrumbs in a third dish. Line a baking sheet with paper towels.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, dredge the beef tongue slices in the flour, shaking off excess, dip into the eggs, and press the slices into the breadcrumbs to coat them evenly. Fry until golden brown on each side, 1½ to 2 minutes per side. Drain on the paper towels and continue until you have fried all the slices.

Slip the cutlets into the sauce to reheat them before serving portions of tongue and sauce with a sprinkling of the parsley.

VARIATION: BEEF TONGUE FRITTERS

For an appetizer, simmer, skin, and chill the tongue as directed, skipping the sauce. Slice, flour, and fry the tongue according to the recipe instructions and serve the hot fritters with Herb Aioli (page 187) or Harissa (page 129).

MORE CHOICE CUTS:

Tenderized steaks, including cube steaks or other round steaks pounded ¼ inch thick (see Chicken Fried Steak with Buttermilk Gravy, page 182), allow you to skip the initial simmering step required for tongue. Make the sauce and fry the beef as directed.

KOREAN BARBECUE

The classic Korean barbecue called *galbi* typically features grilled beef short rib meat marinated in a soy sauce and sesame oil marinade, sprinkled with toasted sesame seeds. Since the bone-in, thinly sliced short ribs called flanken-style or Korean can be hard to find, I substituted skirt steak. Like the ribs, it's got great chew and beefy character and loves a good, long marinade. Served with steamed rice, kimchee, and gochujang, Korean hot sauce (Sources, page 270), this meal lets everyone assemble it to their own tastes.

Makes 4 servings as an entree;
8 servings as an appetizer
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¼ CUP APPLE CIDER
½ CUP SOY SAUCE
6 SCALLIONS, WHITE AND GREEN PARTS, TRIMMED
AND VERY THINLY SLICED
3 GARLIC CLOVES, MINCED
3 TABLESPOONS PACKED LIGHT BROWN SUGAR
2 TABLESPOONS TOASTED SESAME OIL
2 TABLESPOONS CHINESE RICE WINE OR DRY
SHERRY
¼ TEASPOON BLACK PEPPER
1½ POUNDS SKIRT STEAK, SLICED INTO 4-INCH
LONG PIECES
2 TABLESPOONS TOASTED SESAME SEEDS*
¾ TEASPOON SALT

Whisk the cider, soy sauce, scallions, garlic, brown sugar, sesame oil, rice wine, and pepper together in a bowl. Add the beef and marinate it for 3 to 12 hours in the refrigerator.

Preheat a charcoal or gas grill for high heat (425° to 475°F), scrape the grate clean, and oil it lightly. Mix the sesame seeds with the salt and set it aside. Drain the beef, put it on a dinner plate, and discard the marinade.

Grill the beef over the hottest part of the grill until burnished brown, 2½ to 3 minutes per side. Because it is so thin, it will cook to medium. Sprinkle the beef with the reserved sesame seed mixture before serving warm or at room temperature.

NOTE: Sesame seeds are sold toasted, which are more expensive, and untoasted. To toast your own, heat a dry skillet over medium heat. Add the sesame seeds, reduce the heat to low, and stand by. As they start to snap, slide the pan back and forth across the burner every 30 seconds until most of the seeds are golden brown, 2 to 2½ minutes. Pour the seeds into a bowl to cool.

MORE CHOICE CUTS:

Flank steak is another boneless option to marinate and quick-grill.

Flanken-style short ribs are thin, crosscut shortribs, the standard for Korean barbecue; use 2 pounds to yield enough meat per serving.



WHISKEY POT PIE

Using a single pot, this beef pie simmers on the stovetop ever so briefly before it finishes cooking in the oven beneath a golden brown crust. The alcohol in the whiskey cooks off, leaving an unbeatable flavor. Suet-Butter Pie Crust (recipe follows) makes the flakiest crust I know, but you can substitute your favorite homemade or purchased dough for the top crust. To go straight from the stovetop to the oven, you'll need a deep oven-safe skillet, ideally ten inches wide and at least two inches deep.

Makes 6 servings

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3 TABLESPOONS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
1 TEASPOON SALT
1 POUND STEW BEEF, CUT INTO 1-INCH CUBES
1 TABLESPOON SALTED BUTTER
1 TABLESPOON VEGETABLE OIL
1 LEEK, GREEN AND WHITE PARTS CHOPPED
2 MEDIUM CARROTS, CHOPPED
3 TABLESPOONS LIGHTLY PACKED CHOPPED FRESH PARSLEY
2 TEASPOONS LIGHTLY PACKED CHOPPED FRESH THYME OR ½ TEASPOON DRIED
⅓ TEASPOON BLACK PEPPER
2½ CUPS LOW-SALT BEEF STOCK (SHORT ORDER STOCK, PAGE 226; ROASTED BEEF STOCK, PAGE 228) OR WATER
5 TABLESPOONS WHISKEY
2 TABLESPOONS DIJON MUSTARD
1 MEDIUM POTATO (ABOUT 8 OUNCES), PEELED AND CUT INTO ½-INCH CUBES
1 (9-INCH) UNBAKED PIE DOUGH SUCH AS SUET-BUTTER PIE DOUGH (RECIPE FOLLOWS)
FLOUR FOR DUSTING

Whisk the flour with the salt and toss it with the beef cubes until they are well coated. Heat the butter and oil in a large and deep oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. When the butter foams, add the beef cubes and cook, turning them 2 to 3 times, until well browned, about 8 minutes.

Add the leek and carrots and cook until the whites of the leek turn translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the parsley, thyme, pepper, and the stock and stir, scraping up the browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Reduce the heat to low, stir in the whiskey and mustard, and cover.

Simmer the stew for 30 minutes. The beef will still be firm, but become tender while baking. Taste the beef for salt and pepper, then stir in the potatoes, and let the stew cool slightly while you prepare the crust.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Roll out the pie dough on a lightly floured countertop into a circle at least ¼ inch thick. Trace a paring knife around a dinner plate a little larger than the circumference of your skillet to make the round top crust. Lift the crust up gently and center it on top of the beef filling. It will sink down and invert neatly up the sides of the skillet. Use a paring knife to make 4 slits in the top of the crust for vents. Bake the pie until the crust is golden brown and some of the gravy is bubbling up around the edges, 60 to 70 minutes. Let it cool for 20 minutes before serving.

MORE CHOICE CUTS:

Kidneys, if you're partial to them, belong in this pie along with the beef. About 8 ounces, trimmed (page 51) and cut into 1-inch chunks, will do nicely if you cook them with the beef and bake as directed.