
BASIC BEEF POT ROAST

INGREDIENTS

- **1** (2 1/2- to 3 1/2-pound) beef chuck or arm roast
- 1 tablespoon of salt
- **2** tablespoons of butter
- **2** medium onions, halved and sliced thin (about 2 cups)
- **1** large carrot, chopped medium (about 1 cup)
- **1** celery rib, chopped medium (about 3/4 cup)
- **2** medium garlic cloves, minced or pressed through garlic press (about 2 teaspoons)
- **3** cups beef broth (chicken broth can work, too, but will have a less beefy flavor)
- **1/2** cup dry red wine, plus 1/4 cup for sauce
- **1** tablespoon tomato paste
- **1** bay leaf
- **1/2** teaspoon of dried thyme
- Ground black pepper
- **1** tablespoon of balsamic vinegar

Instructions:

1. Sprinkle meat with 1 tablespoon salt (1½ teaspoons if using table salt), place on wire rack set in rimmed baking sheet, and let stand at room temperature 1 hour. If you don't have time to wait an hour, just start cooking. Waiting an hour allows the salt to absorb into the meat, which improves flavor.
2. Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 300 degrees. Heat butter in heavy-bottomed Dutch oven over medium heat. When foaming subsides, add onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and beginning to brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Add carrot and celery; continue to cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes longer. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in 1 cup broth, ½ cup wine, tomato paste, bay leaf, and thyme sprig; bring to simmer.
3. Pat beef dry with paper towels and season generously with pepper.
4. Place meat on top of vegetables. Cover pot tightly with large piece of foil and cover with lid; transfer pot to oven. Cook beef until fully tender and sharp knife easily slips in and out of meat, 3½ to 4 hours, turning halfway through cooking.

5. Transfer roasts to cutting board and tent loosely with foil. Strain liquid through mesh strainer into 4-cup liquid measuring cup. Discard bay leaf and thyme sprig. Transfer vegetables to blender jar. Allow liquid to settle 5 minutes, then skim any fat off surface. Add beef broth as necessary to bring liquid amount to 3 cups. Place liquid in blender with vegetables and blend until smooth, about 2 minutes. Transfer sauce to medium saucepan and bring to simmer over medium heat.

6. While sauce heats, remove twine from roast and slice against grain into 1/2-inch-thick slices. Transfer meat to large serving platter. Stir chopped thyme, remaining 1/4 cup wine, and vinegar into sauce and season to taste with salt and pepper. Spoon half of sauce over meat; pass remaining sauce separately.

MAKE-AHEAD POT ROAST

Classic Pot Roast can be made up to 2 days ahead: Follow the recipe through step 4, transferring the cooked roasts to a large bowl. Strain and defat the liquid as directed in step 5 and add beef broth as necessary to bring the liquid amount to 3 cups. Transfer the vegetables and liquid to the bowl with the roasts, cool for 1 hour, cover with plastic wrap, cut vents in the plastic, and refrigerate overnight or up to 48 hours. One hour before serving, adjust the oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 325 degrees. Transfer the cold roasts to a cutting board, slice them against the grain into 1/2-inch-thick slices, place them in a 13 by 9-inch baking dish, cover tightly with foil, and bake until heated through, about 45 minutes. While the roast heats, puree the liquid and vegetables as directed in step 5. Bring the sauce to a simmer and finish as directed in step 6 before serving with the meat.