Recipe

Cassoulet

Cassoulet is a true family dish which originates from the Midi-Pyrénées area of France. There are many variations of the dish using lamb or mutton, pork, duck and local sausage. It is a substantial meal, but one that is appetising and sure to be a winner. It is also a great dish to cook for your friends, they will love it too!

If you have a course to start with, make sure it is something light!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb (about half a kg) haricot beans, soaked overnight
- 8 oz (225 gms) garlic or Toulouse sausage
- 1 lb (about half a kg) shoulder of mutton or lamb
- 4 oz (125 gms) streaky bacon, or lardons
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 1 medium onion with 2 cloves stuck in it
- Small bunch of parsley
- 2 fresh tomatoes de-seeded
- 4 oz (125 gms) breadcrumbs
- 2 oz goose fat or oil if you prefer (enough to brown the meat)

And
- 8 oz (225 gms) of preserved goose (confit d’oie) – many supermarkets stock this nowadays, or if you cannot obtain this (from speciality food stores/or online) you can add more lamb or mutton, pork or even more sausage or a small duck!

Use whatever you prefer or can obtain.

METHOD

- Prepare the haricot beans by draining them, then place in a large saucepan with cold water and boil vigorously for 10 minutes. (instructions are usually on the packet)
- Drain the beans and place in a heavy bottomed stockpot or marmite. Add enough cold water or to cover and bring to the boil, then lower to simmer.
- Simmer for about 1 hour.
- Now melt the goose fat in a heavy bottomed pan and cook the diced meat until it is brown on all sides.
• Add the meat, the sausage, the tomatoes and the parsley tied in a bunch to the beans.
• Add the onion stuck with the cloves and put a lid on the pot.
• Simmer for about 2 hours.
• Chop the garlic and streaky bacon together and add to the beans.
• Cook for another 1-2 hours.

Now it is almost ready to serve.

• If it has thickened too much, add a little more water.
• Sprinkle the breadcrumbs over the cassoulet and put in a pre-heated moderate oven and cook for another 30 minutes.
• As the breadcrumbs turn brown and crisp, break them up and allow the juices to mix in with them.
• Allow the breadcrumbs to crisp again and serve immediately.