

Slow Cooker South American Beef Stew with Masa Cakes & Escabeche

2 SERVINGS | HANDS ON TIME: 15 minutes | TOTAL TIME: 5-8 hours

Augustus Ranch Beef Stew Meat, thawed
Tenaza Organics Collard Greens, washed
Johnson's Backyard Garden Carrots, washed, peeled (optional)
Mozzarella Company Queso Fresco
Farmhouse Kitchen-prepared Jesse's Tortilla Factory Masa Dough
Farmhouse Kitchen Stew Sauce
Farmhouse Kitchen Escabeche (Mexican-style pickled vegetables)
Sea salt and fresh cracked black pepper
Olive or vegetable oil

Notes: A 2-3.5 quart slow cooker is recommended. The cook time will vary depending on whether you choose to cook over low or high heat, as well as the brand of slow cooker. If you prefer, you can skip the searing instructions in Step 1 and place the meat and sauce directly into the slow cooker insert.

MORNING

STEP 1 Place a large pan over medium-high heat. As the pan is heating, pat the beef dry with paper towels. Cut any larger pieces of beef in half so that all pieces are roughly the same size, about 1". Season with ½ tsp. salt and pepper. When the pan is hot, add 1 tbsp. oil and the beef in a single layer. Brown the beef on all sides, about 4-5 minutes. Turn off the heat and transfer the beef to the slow cooker. (You may need to brown the beef in batches depending on the size of your pan. Add the first batch to the slow cooker before searing the next batch.)

STEP 2 Carefully pour the stew sauce into the hot skillet to deglaze. Use a wooden spoon to scrape up the flavorful crust that has developed. Transfer the sauce from the skillet to the slow cooker. Chop the carrots into 2" pieces and add to the slow cooker. Gently stir to submerge. Set the temperature to low and cook for 8 hours or set to high and cook for 5 hours.

EVENING

STEP 3 During the last hour of slow cooking, remove and discard the large ribs from the collard greens. Roughly chop the collard green leaves into 2" pieces. Add to the slow cooker and gently stir. Continue to slow cook for an additional hour. After slow cooking, the beef and carrots should be tender and easily cut with a fork. The collard greens should wilt down and soften. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

STEP 4 Meanwhile, prepare the masa cakes. Scoop the masa dough into 8-10 portions (about 1.5 tbsp. each). Press each portion into a disk, about ¼" thick and 2-3" wide. Divide the queso fresco across half of the masa disks and top each with a remaining masa disk. Pinch all around each disk to flatten and seal. Heat ½ cup oil in a large cast iron skillet or heavy-bottomed pan over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, fry the masa cakes for 2-4 minutes on each side until crisp and golden. Add more oil and adjust temperature, as needed. Transfer masa cakes to a paper-towel lined plate and season with salt while hot.

STEP 5 To serve, ladle the beef and vegetable stew into serving bowls. Serve with crispy, cheese masa cakes and escabeche. Enjoy!