

The Canadian Soldiers Stew (The Haviland Club 2022)



History

Because stews were easy to make, the meat rations of soldiers were nearly always stewed. Stews were usually bland, made with salt beef and various spices and other ingredients. Rather than relying on traditional salt beef from local butchers, spices were also available thanks to trade on the St Lawrence River.

Legend has it that the term “potluck” comes from the traditional serving practices of stew to soldiers. The mess men would dish out a serving, which did not always include a portion of vegetables and meat, and the Corporal assigned the serving to an individual. If you ended up with a good portion of meat and vegetables, this was your *pot luck*.

Ingredients

- ¾ Lb/ 1.5 kg Beef Roast or Top Butt Cut into 1” cubes
- ½ C/ 125 ml Butter
- 2 C/ 500 ml Diced Onion
- 1 C/ 250 ml Diced Celery
- 3 Qts/ 3 L Water
- 4 Medium Potatoes Diced
- 3 Lg. Carrots Diced
- 4 C/ 1 L Cabbage Chopped
- 2 Tsp./ 10 ml Salt
- 1 Tsp./ 5 ml Pepper

Preparation

1. In a large iron cauldron, melt the butter; add the beef and brown. Add the onions and celery and sauté until the onions are slightly browned, about 5-10 minutes, depending upon the heat of the fire. Add the water and bring to a boil. Keep at a rolling boil for about 1½ hours or until the beef is tender. Skim any foam that forms on the surface of the water and discard.
2. Add the potatoes, carrots, cabbage and seasonings; simmer until the potatoes start to break up and thicken the stew, about 15-20 minutes. If the stew is too thin for your taste, mix 1 tbsp of flour with ¼ cup of water and add to the stew while it is simmering. Season to taste with more salt and pepper if necessary. Serve with fresh bread.
3. Allow 3 hrs. Cooking time, in case the fire doesn't cooperate.