

## Family-Style Beef Chilli

Serves 4–6

Ask your butcher to prepare the rump steak for you or ask them what other cuts they have that might be suitable, as any braising meat is perfect for this type of cooking. Serve with tortilla chips, soured cream, guacamole and hot chilli sauce, depending on what you fancy.

Prep 20 MINS + SOAKING OVERNIGHT

Cook 10½ HRS

LOADS OF VEG

FREEZER FRIENDLY

225g (8oz) dried black turtle beans

2 tbsp rapeseed oil

2 onions, finely chopped

2 celery sticks, finely chopped

1 large green pepper, finely diced

1 tbsp dark brown sugar

500g (1lb 2oz) rump steak, trimmed

and diced into 1cm (½in) cubes

3 garlic cloves, crushed

2 tbsp Cajun seasoning (I like the Dunnes Stores Simply Better

Organic Cajun Spice Seasoning)

600ml (1 pint) beef or chicken stock (from a cube is fine)

2 × 400g (14oz) tins of Italian

chopped tomatoes

2 tbsp tomato purée

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

### TO SERVE

tortilla chips

lime wedges

fresh coriander leaves

soured cream

guacamole

Sriracha hot chilli sauce

Soak the beans in plenty of cold water overnight, then drain. Preheat your slow cooker according to the manufacturer's instructions. If your slow cooker has a sauté option, you can use this; if not, use a large sauté pan on the hob over a medium heat. Heat the oil, then add the onions, celery, green pepper and sugar. Cook for 15–20 minutes, stirring from time to time, until golden and well caramelised. Don't be tempted to decrease the amount of time this takes, as this is very important for the flavour. Add the beef and mix until well combined, then sauté for another few minutes, until well browned. Stir in the garlic and Cajun seasoning. Deglaze the pan with a little of the stock, scraping the bottom of the pan to remove any browned bits. Pour in the remaining stock along with the tomatoes and tomato purée and break up using a wooden spoon. Place in the slow cooker (if you have used a separate pan), including the juices. Season well with salt and pepper and stir in the black beans. Cover and cook on low for 10 hours, until the meat and beans are meltingly tender. Serve bowls of the beef chilli with tortilla chips, lime wedges and fresh coriander leaves. Pass around the soured cream, guacamole and chilli sauce separately so that everyone can help themselves.

## Moroccan Chicken Tagine with Butternut Squash

Serves 4–6

I like to make this with chicken thighs, but I'd always get my butcher to prep them for me by removing the skin, trimming them and removing the bones. Otherwise breasts also work well, and because the heat of the slow cooker is so gentle, they stay nice and moist. Use pumpkin instead of the butternut squash if it's in season.

Prep 25 MINS

Cooking 4½ HRS

LOADS OF VEG

FREEZER FRIENDLY

4 tbsp rapeseed oil

2 large onions, roughly chopped

4 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 × 2.5cm (1in) piece of fresh root ginger, peeled and finely chopped

2 tbsp mild curry powder or paste

(I love the Dunnes Stores Simply Better Mild Curry Seasoning)

2 tsp ground turmeric

2 tsp ground cinnamon

2 × 400g (14oz) tins of Italian chopped tomatoes

500g (1lb 2oz) boneless, skinless chicken cubes (thigh or breast)

1 butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into cubes

2 tbsp clear honey

about 450ml (¾ pint) chicken stock (from a cube is fine)

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

### TO GARNISH

chopped fresh mint and/or coriander

roughly chopped toasted pistachio nuts

### TO SERVE

couscous

natural yoghurt

Preheat your slow cooker according to the manufacturer's instructions. If your slow cooker has a sauté option, you can use this; if not, use a large sauté pan on the hob over a medium heat. Heat the oil, then add the onions and sauté for 8–10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until they are softened and have taken on a little colour. Add the garlic and ginger and sauté for another 3–4 minutes. Stir in the curry powder or paste, turmeric and cinnamon and cook for 1 minute. Pour in the tomatoes and carefully blend to a thick purée with a hand-held blender. Using a spatula, transfer to the slow cooker (if you have used a separate pan). Stir the chicken into the tomato base along with the butternut squash and honey, adding enough stock to make a thick-ish sauce that barely covers all

the ingredients. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and cook on low for 4 hours, until the chicken and butternut squash are completely tender. When ready to serve, make the couscous according to the packet instructions and spoon into wide-rimmed bowls. Ladle over the tagine and add a dollop of yoghurt to each one, then scatter the herbs and pistachio nuts on top to garnish.

### **Ragù alla Bolognese with Butter Beans**

Serves 8–12

There's no doubt that making an authentic Bolognese can take a bit of time, which is why I'll always make a large quantity so that I can freeze it in smaller batches. It's perfect for making in a slow cooker, as it really draws off the flavour and makes the meat incredibly tender.

**30 MINS + SOAKING OVERNIGHT**

**8½ HRS**

**LOADS OF VEG**

**FREEZER FRIENDLY**

225g (8oz) dried butter beans  
2 tbsp rapeseed oil  
2 onions, finely chopped  
2 carrots, finely diced  
2 celery sticks, finely diced  
200g (7oz) mushrooms, finely diced  
350g (12oz) lean minced beef  
350g (12oz) lean minced pork  
300ml (½ pint) red wine  
2 × 400g (14oz) tins of Italian whole plum tomatoes  
1 bouquet garni (bay leaf, thyme, rosemary, sage)  
about 600ml (1 pint) chicken stock (from a cube is fine)  
675–900g (1½–2lb) spaghetti  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

#### **TO SERVE**

freshly shaved Parmesan cheese

Soak the beans in plenty of cold water overnight, then drain. Preheat your slow cooker according to the manufacturer's instructions. If your slow cooker has a sauté option, you can use this; if not, use a large sauté pan on the hob over a medium heat. Heat the oil, then add the onions, carrots, celery and mushrooms. Cook for 8–10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables have softened and taken on a little colour. Add the minced beef and pork and mix until well combined, then sauté until well browned, breaking up any lumps with a wooden spoon. Deglaze the pan with a little of the red wine, scraping the bottom of the pan to remove any browned bits. Pour in the remaining wine along with the plum tomatoes and break them up using a wooden spoon. Place in the slow cooker (if you have used a separate pan), including the juices. Add the butter beans and bouquet garni and season with salt and pepper. Pour in the stock, stirring to combine. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours, until the meat and beans are meltingly tender. When ready to serve, cook the spaghetti in a pan of boiling salted water for 10–12 minutes, until al dente (tender but still with a little bite). Add to the ragù, tossing until well combined, then divide between warmed bowls. Scatter over the Parmesan shavings and add a good grinding of black pepper to serve.