

A Robust Italian Stew

WINE-BRAISED BEEF OVER CREAMY POLENTA (COVER RECIPE)

6 SERVINGS

BEEF

- 3 tablespoons olive oil (preferably extra-virgin)
- 7 pounds beef chuck roast, trimmed, boned, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 large onion, minced
- ¼ cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice

- 1 cup dry red wine

- 2¼ cups beef stock or canned broth
- 2 14- to 16-ounce cans whole Italian plum tomatoes
- ½ cup pitted Niçoise olives*
- 4 teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary or 2 teaspoons dried, crumbled
- 2 red bell peppers, cut into ¼-inch-wide strips

Heat oil in heavy Dutch oven over high

leaves, cloves, cinnamon and allspice.

Return beef to Dutch oven and stir to coat with onion and spice mixture. Add red wine and bring to boil, scraping up any browned bits. Simmer mixture 15 minutes. Add beef stock and simmer 10 minutes. Add tomatoes with their juices, breaking up tomatoes with back of spoon. Mix in olives and rosemary. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook until beef is tender, stirring occasionally, about 1½ hours. Add bell peppers, cover and cook until just tender, about 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. (*Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.*)

**Small brine-cured black olives, available at specialty foods stores.*

POLENTA

- 9 cups water
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 2 cups cornmeal

Bring water and salt to boil in heavy large saucepan. Gradually whisk in cornmeal. Continue whisking until mixture boils and thickens, about 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Cook cornmeal until thick and thoroughly cooked, whisking occasionally, about

SEE TABLE OF CONTENTS