

SLOW COOKED RABBIT

Serves 6 to 8.

By Dennis W. Viau; modified from several recipes.

The original recipe, from the 1700s, was “jugged hare” because the rabbit was cooked in a ceramic jug placed in a pot of simmering water in a fireplace. Today we have appliances that make cooking much easier. For this recipe you can use a crock pot, casserole dish with cover, or a pan on the stove. I used my Instant Pot as a slow cooker. You could also do this dish with chicken pieces.



Ingredients:

2 tablespoons oil
1 rabbit, about 3 pounds (1.4kg), sectioned, preferably with giblets
1 small to medium onion
About 20 to 30 whole cloves
1 carrot
1 stalk of celery
About 10 sprigs fresh thyme
5 sprigs fresh marjoram
1 bay leaf
About ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg
½ cup (120ml) dry white wine or vermouth
½ cup (120ml) chicken or vegetable stock
Salt & pepper

Directions:

Heat the oil in a skillet. Lightly brown the rabbit pieces on both sides. Transfer to a crock pot or other type of cooker.

Stud the onion with whole cloves by pushing the pointy end into the onion. Arrange the rabbit pieces in the crock pot. Add the onion along with all the other ingredients. Cover the pot and set the cooking time for about 5 hours. A longer cooking time will help the rabbit meat to be more tender.

Transfer the rabbit to a serving dish and cover. Strain the liquid in the pot, transferring it to the skillet used earlier. If the rabbit was packaged with giblets, add them to the skillet. Heat to a boil and reduce the heat to medium. Reduce the liquid by about half, cooking the giblets in the process.

Transfer the contents of the skillet to a stainless steel bowl or large measuring cup and purée the giblets with an immersion blender, or strain the liquid. Spoon the liquid over the cooked rabbit. Serve with your favorite vegetables. (According to my *Larousse Gastronomique Encyclopedia*, in France this rabbit dish is often served with noodles.)

The **Step By Step** guide begins on the following page.

STEP-BY-STEP

1



Start by browning the rabbit pieces on both sides. Although this can be done in the Instant Pot using the Sauté function, the bottom of the pot is small. It was more efficient to use a large skillet.

2



Here was an idea I liked in one video. Rather than adding whole cloves to the pot and then fishing them out later, the cloves were pushed into an onion. At the end of the cooking time the onion is removed, taking the cloves with it.

3



Add the other vegetables to the pot.

4



I am seasoning with a *bouquet garni* I fresh thyme and marjoram from my little herb garden.

5



I used up all my homemade chicken stock; so I bought low-sodium broth for this recipe.

6



Start the Instant Pot or crock pot, or whatever cooking method you are using (you could do this recipe in a covered casserole dish and bake in the oven) and cook for about 5 hours. A longer cooking time will give you a more tender rabbit.

7



At the end of the cooking time, strain the liquid into a skillet. Add the reserved giblets (if they were packaged with the rabbit) and cook over medium heat to reduce the liquid by about half.

8



I used an immersion blender to purée the giblets into the sauce. This flavors the sauce slightly with the liver. Some people don't like the idea of liver; but, like anchovies, it does impart a flavor that enriches some sauces. Taste for salt and adjust, if necessary.



Plate the rabbit with your favorite vegetables and garnish the meat with a little of the sauce.

Conclusion

This cooking method resulted in rabbit meat that was tender enough to almost fall off the bone. The herbs gave the meat a rustic flavor that was reminiscent of food cooked “in the hunter’s style.” As mentioned in the introduction, you could do this recipe with chicken pieces. I’d like to prepare this again in the future using chicken drumsticks.