

# **BOB'S NEW ENGLAND BOILED DINNER ALSO CORNED BEEF AND CABBAGE**

New England boiled dinner is basically a one pot dinner with everything in it. It is based on corned beef (plain brisket if you don't have corned beef) and a pot load of vegetables, usually: Potatoes, carrots, onions, turnips, rutabagas, cabbage, and some even add beets (yuk) or a combination that you like. The amounts and ratios change depending upon the size of your corned beef and the number of people you are serving. Yep, more people – add more veggies. The best way to make this dinner is to first cure your own corned beef. Please see another of my recipes to guide you on that journey. The home cure is so much tastier than the things they call corned beef that is sold in the stores. Sometimes though we just have to settle on second best, so use the store bought if you must. Remember, if you make too much (that is have too much corned beef), you can always make corned beef sandwiches the next day OR make corned beef hash for breakfast. You can even can corned beef hash (see another of my recipes.)

If you wish to do just **corned beef and cabbage**, use the following, but use only the cabbage and omit the other vegetables as you like.

However, there are a few hints along the way, so here we go.

## **Ingredients**

Corned Beef (flat or point) – Home cure or store bought maybe 4 or 5 pounds or more if you want lots of leftovers or if you are having lots of people. If you are using home cured, it is probably from the freezer, so put the meat in the refrigerator the day before to defrost.

Potatoes

Carrots

Turnips and/or Rutabagas

Onion or two thick sliced

1 or 2 heads of cabbage depending upon size.

2 Cans of beer (more if the cook needs some, room temp for the pot, cold for the cook)

Home Made Pickling Spice (see other recipe)

Salt and Pepper

## **Process**

Take the corned beef to the sink and give it a good washing. The spices used during the curing process only affect a small amount of the surface. They cannot penetrate the meat during the curing process like the brine does. (The commercial stuff doesn't soak the meat to cure it, but injects the meat with the cure with lots of little needles.) So, we want to use fresh new spices that do penetrate the meat while cooking.

If there is any large amount of fat, cut off what you can. Don't try to cut the fat between the layers if there is any. Although fat usually adds lots of good flavor to the pot and the

meat, corned beef fat usually becomes rubbery and not too tasty. If you are using store-bought, throw away the spice packet that was included. We need fresh.

Place the beer and some water in the large pot you will use for the entire dinner and bring it to a boil. (Drink some beer.) You will have to watch to make sure it doesn't boil over because of the beer's carbonation. Once boiling add the meat. Once it begins to boil, turn it down to a good simmer. You may cover the pot to help it simmer, but watch for it to boil over, especially in the beginning. Cook for about 10 to 15 minutes then skim the top to remove what you can of the scum. This will help remove some of the bitterness. Now add a couple to a few tablespoons of your home made pickling spice (left whole, don't grind it to a powder). Cover and simmer for about 3 hours until the meat is just tender. (Drink more beer.) Check the pot occasionally to make sure that the meat is covered with the liquid and add water if needed.

When the meat is getting close to tender, you will want to prepare the vegetables. Peel the potatoes, carrots, turnips and/or rutabagas and cut them into 2" to 3" pieces or larger. Place them in a bowl of water so they don't brown. Cut the onion(s) in half and then into thick slices and put them in another bowl. Cut the cabbages into 6 to 8 wedges. Do not cut away the base; you want the cabbage to be in whole pieces. When the meat is just tender, add all the drained vegetables except the cabbages to the water with the meat. You may need to add a bit more water to almost cover the vegetables. Bring the pot to boil then turn down the heat to a good simmer. Cover and cook for 30 minutes.

The meat should be well tender now. Remove the meat and wrap with aluminum foil then cover with a towel and put aside to rest and keep warm.

Turn up the heat on the pot (Taste if you need to add salt. You probably won't because the meat will have added quite a bit of salt, but the vegetables may have soaked it up, so give it a taste and add if you need to. But remember salt and pepper can be added at the table.) Add the cabbage, cover and simmer for about another 15 minutes or until the cabbage is tender.

When you are ready to serve, unwrap the corned beef and slice it across the grain. Place a cabbage slice on each plate along with a good helping of each of the vegetables and some slices of corned beef. Alternately, you may put all on platters and serve at the table as you like.

Butter for the vegetables is a good addition. Mustard is a must for the corned beef. Plain is good, Dijon is better, and flavored or honey mustard can add a wonderful surprise too. Why not have more than one and let your guests pick their favorite. And of course, a beer to go with dinner is not a bad thing, unless you are a little kid.

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