

VEAL STOCK

A Chef's repertoire MUST include a good veal stock. I can't stress this enough. A chef without his veal stock is like a cat without its claws. It's a MUST! A well-composed veal stock lays the ground work for an exciting world of soups, sauces and stews. But more importantly, it's the first step to building perhaps the most gorgeous sauce known to humankind: demi glace. Actually mole negro is probably the most gorgeous. But demi wins for it's diplomatic standing with a range of dishes.

The Shopping List:

- 10 lbs of meaty veal bones (local butcher)
- 1 lb of carrots, scrubbed and chopped
- 1 lb of onions, peeled and chopped
- 6 celery stalks, washed and chopped
- 4 large leeks, washed well and chopped
- fresh thyme
- Italian parsley
- bay leaves
- black peppercorns
- tomato paste

Putting it together:

Set your oven to 400, and put a large roasting pan inside to heat up. Rinse the bones well under cold running water. Toss the bones in the hot pan, then into the oven. Turn the bones as they cook, getting them brown on all sides.

Once your bones are a rich dark colour (45 - 60 mins), put them into a tall stockpot. Pour a cup of water into the roasting pan, and deglaze it, scraping all the yummy bits off the bottom with a spatula. Pour this into the pot, and bring it to a simmer at a medium heat.

Scum will rise to the top - skim this off, then add your prepped veg, 2 bay leaves, 4 thyme and parsley sprigs, a good dollop of tomato paste, and a handful of peppercorns.

Low simmer the stock for 12 - 14 hours, skimming occasionally.

When done, cool the stock. Strain through a colander, and portion off. Freeze some. Refrigerate some. Make a soup.

And you can reuse your cooked bones and veg to make a "remouillage". To translate, this literally means "rewetting" in French. A weaker but still useful stock to have on hand, just put the whole whack back in a pot, top with water, and simmer for at least 5 - 6 hours.

