

Beef casseroles...  
flavoursome,  
warming and  
comforting.

Every one of our delicious casseroles makes you 'feel good'. They're nourishing, warming and full of flavour. Choose from traditional beef casseroles using slow simmer beef cuts that will melt-in-your-mouth, to faster options that take just 40 minutes to cook, or, if you're really time pressed try a casserole using beef sausages. They all taste great!

For this quick sausage casserole and other delicious recipes, visit [www.enticemagazine.com.au](http://www.enticemagazine.com.au)

Beef sausage & spicy tomato casserole



**beef** casserole get into it



# ENTICE

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BEEF CASSEROLE...AS EASY AS 1,2,3

**FREE**



Warm up with a delicious beef casserole this winter

# Good things come to those that wait

So what's the rush? Comforting, warming, rich and flavourful, beef casseroles are very good indeed. They're the perfect family meal, and despite their slow cooking time, beef casseroles are quick and easy to prepare. Think of it this way...once it's on, a beef casserole pretty well looks after itself.

We feature a 'master recipe' for an easy beef casserole using classic flavours and simple techniques. It's a recipe that can be easily adapted. Start with beef and use what you have on hand. Mix and match the ingredients with flavours to suit your taste (see page 5 for ideas). All you need to keep in mind is that for each kilogram of beef, you will need 3 to 3½ cups of liquid in total (like stock, canned tomatoes, etc).

There's only one rule...let your casserole simmer gently. Letting the meat and vegetables slowly simmer gives you a rich flavoured dish. Controlling the heat is important – too low a heat and the dish will be flavourless, too high a heat and the mixture will boil and the meat will be tough.

Making a beef casserole is simple, using our hints and tips as a starting point makes it even easier. For more delicious beef casserole ideas, visit [www.enticemagazine.com.au](http://www.enticemagazine.com.au)



# Beef casseroles – what you need to know

## Matching the beef cut to the cooking time you have available is the most important consideration

Choose from chuck, boneless shin/gravy beef or osso bucco, these take about 2 to 2½ hours to cook. They offer the richest flavour and the most succulent meat, but they do need longer cooking time to make them tender.

Beef topside, blade and round need only 1 to 1½ hours of slow simmering to maximise their tenderness, keep in mind though, they can be tough or chewy to taste if not cooked long enough.

Cut the beef into 2.5 to 3cm cubes (or ask the butcher to do this), any smaller and the cubes of meat will shrink as they cook. Keeping the cubes of meat the same size will give you consistency in texture and flavour.



## Don't rush the initial stage of browning the meat

Brown the beef in a large frypan in small batches. Keep the pan at medium-high heat as you cook. You don't want the beef to 'stew' in its own juices. This happens if the pan is not hot enough or if you try to cook too much meat at once – you'll get tough dry meat that lacks flavour.

The pan needs to be hot enough for the meat to sizzle but not so hot that it scorches and burns portions of the meat or results in a blackened pan. This will give a burnt taste to the casserole.

## Simmer the casserole gently and taste it to see if it's ready

The gentle heat of simmering is used to draw the full flavour out of foods. A slow simmer is when small amounts of tiny bubbles rise to the surface of the cooking liquid.

To judge if your casserole is ready, simply taste it – the sauce should be rich in flavour and slightly thickened. Whatever the suggested cut of beef, the meat should be tender enough to fall apart easily with a fork. If it's not done put it back in the oven or on the cooktop and simmer for another 15 minutes or so before tasting again.

# Beef casseroles – your options for cuts and timing

Beef cuts (2.5 - 3cm cubes)	Approximate cooking time	Guide to cooking temperatures
chuck, boneless shin/ gravy beef, osso bucco pieces	2 - 2½ hours	160 - 180°C
topside, round, blade	1 - 1½ hours	160 - 180°C

These temperatures and times can only be a guide, the different beef cuts and the type of dish they are cooked in will give variances of timing. The oven temperature generally starts at 180°C but if the casserole is cooking too quickly it should be lowered to about 160°C.

# The 'master recipe'

**Serves:** 4 - 6

**Preparation time:** 20 minutes

**Cooking time:** 1 - 1½ hours or 2 - 2½ hours

**Beef** (see page 3 for cuts and timing options)

1kg beef

## Vegetables

1 large onion, diced  
2 medium carrots, diced

## Flavour base

2 tbsp plain flour  
3 cups beef stock  
a good shake each of  
Worcestershire sauce and soy sauce  
4 - 5 sprigs fresh thyme  
2 bay leaves (optional)

### 1. Prepare the beef:

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Cut beef into 2.5 - 3cm cubes. Season with salt and pepper, and add about 2 tablespoons of oil to beef, mix well.

Heat a large frypan over a medium-high heat. Brown the beef in 2 or 3 batches. Remove each batch and place in a casserole dish.

### 2. Add the vegetables:

Reduce heat in pan and add a little extra oil. Add the vegetables and cook for 1 - 2 minutes, stir occasionally.

### 3. Adding the flavour base:

Sprinkle in the flour and/or other seasoning and stir until the vegetables are coated. Gradually pour in the stock or other liquid, stirring well. Add the remaining flavour base ingredients, stirring until the mixture boils. Pour over the beef in the casserole dish and stir to combine. Cover the casserole dish, place in oven. Stir every 40 minutes or so, add water if needed to keep the ingredients just covered. Cook until the beef is very tender.

**Cooktop method:** Place the browned beef and other ingredients in a heavy-based pot.

Partially cover, keep the heat low. Stir occasionally, add water if needed during the cooking time to keep ingredients well covered. Simmer until the meat is very tender.

## Mix and match ideas

By using the master recipe and simply switching a couple of ingredients, you can create other delicious casseroles - try these ideas and you'll soon get a feel for it.

### Option A

## Beef, mushroom & red wine casserole

**Beef** (see page 3 for cuts and timing options)

1kg beef

## Vegetables

250g button mushrooms, halved  
8 - 10 whole baby onions, peeled  
2 cloves garlic, crushed

## Flavour base

2 tbsp plain flour  
1 cup red wine  
3 cups beef stock  
4 - 5 sprigs fresh thyme  
2 bay leaves (optional)

### Option B

## Beef, capsicum & paprika casserole

**Beef** (see page 3 for cuts and timing options)

1kg beef

## Vegetables

2 large onions, halved and thinly sliced  
4 cloves garlic, crushed  
1 carrot, finely diced  
2 medium red capsicums, diced large

## Flavour base

2 tbsp sweet paprika  
2 tbsp plain flour  
2 tsp caraway seeds (optional)  
400g can tomato puree (or diced tomatoes)  
2½ cups beef stock

### Option C

## Beef, potato & tomato curry

**Beef** (see page 3 for cuts and timing options)

1kg beef

## Vegetables

1 large onion, chopped

## Flavour base

3 tbsp mild curry paste  
1 tbsp plain flour  
400g can diced tomatoes  
2½ cups beef stock

**Add (in the last 30 minutes of cooking time)**

300g sweet potato or potato, diced large  
fresh coriander, chopped (optional)

Beef casserole  
(master recipe) with  
crispy potato topping  
(see page 6)

## Do it ahead...make it Sunday, enjoy it Monday or Tuesday

Letting a casserole simmer away on a Sunday (while you do other things) is a great way to get organised for the week ahead. Plus, casseroles taste even better the next day – it's true, their flavour mellows beautifully.

A casserole will keep for up to two to three days in the refrigerator. Casseroles should be refrigerated immediately after the steam from cooking has evaporated. Place the hot casserole into a shallow container, and then into the fridge so it cools quickly. Do not leave it to cool completely on the bench.

### One for now...one for later

If you really want to be organised, make a double batch (depending on the width and depth of your oven, you may need to cook one in the oven and one on the cooktop) and freeze one lot. Casseroles freeze very well and can be frozen for two to three months.

Defrost your casserole in the fridge overnight. If you don't have much time you can use the microwave. When using a microwave oven to defrost, the casserole must be reheated and served immediately rather than defrosted and allowed to sit for any length of time.

You can reheat the casserole in the microwave, on the cooktop or in the oven. Whatever method you choose, the casserole must be heated until it's hot.

### To reheat a casserole in the microwave

Place the casserole in a deep-sided dish, cover. Position the casserole dish to the outside of the turntable. Reheat on high setting. Time will vary according to how much casserole mixture there is to reheat. Stir occasionally during reheating, until the contents have bubbled for at least 3 minutes.

### To reheat a casserole in the oven

Place the casserole in a deep-sided dish, cover. Place in a preheated moderate oven (180°C) and cook, stirring occasionally until liquid is very hot (bubbling) and the pieces of meat are fully heated.

### To reheat a casserole on the cooktop

Place the casserole in a heavy-based pan, you may need to add a little water, around ¼ cup. Bring it slowly to the boil over a medium heat, reduce heat and simmer for about 3 minutes, or until meat and sauce are both thoroughly hot.

Make use of the oven while your casserole simmers to make a crispy potato topping.

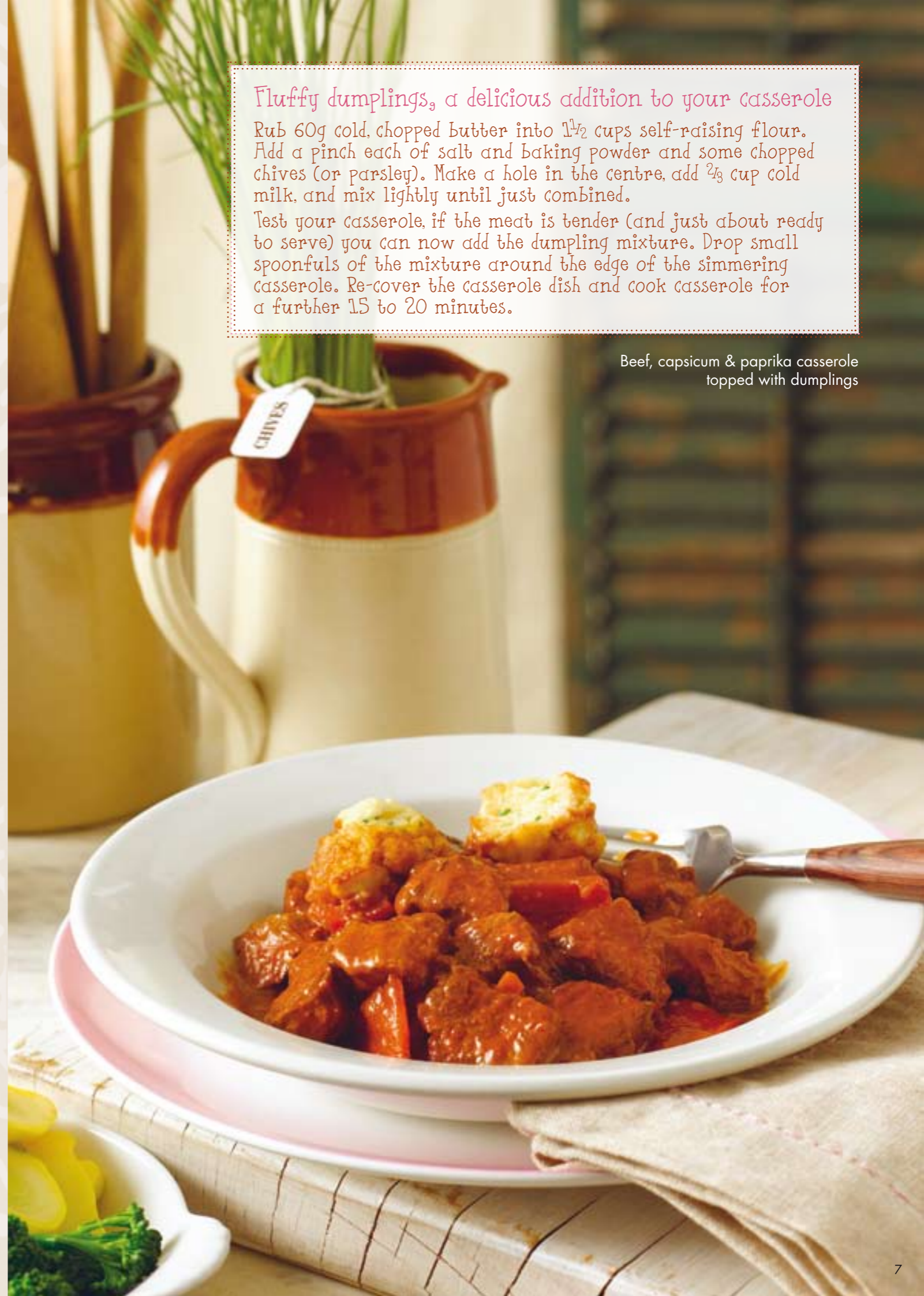
Thinly slice 4 medium-sized potatoes. Toss them with a little oil, salt and some dried oregano (optional). Lay them out in a single layer on a large oven tray (lined with baking paper), bake in the oven with your casserole for 20 to 25 minutes or until they're crispy. Sit the crispy potato slices on top of each serve of casserole.

### Fluffy dumplings, a delicious addition to your casserole

Rub 60g cold, chopped butter into 1½ cups self-raising flour. Add a pinch each of salt and baking powder and some chopped chives (or parsley). Make a hole in the centre, add ⅔ cup cold milk, and mix lightly until just combined.

Test your casserole, if the meat is tender (and just about ready to serve) you can now add the dumpling mixture. Drop small spoonfuls of the mixture around the edge of the simmering casserole. Re-cover the casserole dish and cook casserole for a further 15 to 20 minutes.

Beef, capsicum & paprika casserole topped with dumplings



# Melt-in-your-mouth...osso bucco

'Osso bucco' translates as 'bone with a hole', choose osso bucco pieces with plenty of meat around the bone and marrow present in the centre of the bone. It is also sold as beef shin bone-in.

The marrow is a feature of osso bucco, the delicate marrow is mild yet delicious. You can scoop it out easily when the shin is cooked until the surrounding meat is tender. When you cook with these meaty bone-in pieces, both the meat and bones contribute rich and robust flavour. You'll need to take it slowly, it takes time and gentle cooking to release their succulence.

## Osso bucco

**Serves:** 4 - 6

**Preparation time:** 15 minutes

**Cooking time:** 2 - 2½ hours

- 6 - 8 (3cm thick) pieces osso bucco
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 1 small carrot, finely diced
- 2 small sticks celery, finely diced
- 1 tbsp plain flour
- ½ cup white wine
- ½ cup tomato puree
- 2 cups beef stock
- 1 bay leaf (optional)

### Lemon and parsley garnish

- 1 small clove garlic, very finely chopped
- finely grated rind, 2 lemons
- handful of parsley, chopped

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Season the osso bucco with salt and pepper, add about 2 tablespoons of oil, and mix well. Heat a large frypan over a medium-high heat. Brown the osso bucco in 2 or 3 batches. Remove each batch and place in a large casserole dish.
2. Reduce the heat in the pan, add a little oil, add diced onion, carrot and celery then cook for 1 - 2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Sprinkle in flour and stir until the vegetables are coated. Gradually pour in the combined wine, puree and stock. Stir until the mixture boils, add bay leaf and then pour over the osso bucco. Cover the casserole dish, place in oven. Check every 40 minutes or so and add water if needed to keep the ingredients just covered. Cook until the osso bucco is very tender. Sprinkle with the lemon and parsley garnish to serve.

### To make lemon and parsley garnish:

Combine all ingredients and season with freshly ground salt and pepper.

**Cooktop method:** Place the browned osso bucco and other ingredients in a heavy-based pot. Partially cover and keep heat low. Stir occasionally and add water if needed during the cooking time to keep ingredients well covered. Simmer until the meat is very tender.

Can I cook my casserole on the cooktop rather than in the oven?

Yes you can - you'll just need to pay a little more attention to it. The mixture can sometimes stick to the base of the pan and burn in a regular type saucepan as it's difficult to get the temperature of some cooktops as low as needed. Adding more liquid (stock or water) to the casserole mixture at the start of cooking time and adding a little more as it cooks can offset this. Stir it often. Adjust the heat as the dish cooks.

# Time pressed? Try our 30 – 40 minute ‘casserole’

While not strictly a true casserole this quick braise style of cooking will have a warm and comforting meal on the table in around 40 minutes. It cooks more quickly than a traditional casserole because the blade steak is thinly sliced and quickly browned, and it's cooked in less liquid than longer, slow simmering casseroles.

## Beef stroganoff

**Serves:** 4

**Preparation time:** 10 minutes

**Cooking time:** 30 - 40 minutes

1kg blade steak  
1 onion, cut into thin wedges  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
200g Swiss brown or button mushrooms, thickly sliced  
2 tbsp tomato paste  
2 cups beef stock  
½ cup sour cream  
1 tbsp Dijon mustard  
2 tsp cornflour  
pasta or noodles to serve  
fresh dill

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Cut the steaks across the grain into strips (about 1.5cm wide). Season with salt and pepper. Add a little oil to the beef strips, mix well.
2. Heat a wok or frypan, ensure it is hot. Stir-fry the beef in 3 batches, remove each batch and place it in a casserole dish. Add a little oil to pan, then add the onion, garlic and mushrooms and cook for 2 minutes or until mushrooms soften. Add the tomato paste and stock, stir until the mixture boils. Pour over the beef in the casserole dish and stir to combine.
3. Cover the casserole dish, place in oven, cook for 30 - 40 minutes or until beef is tender. In the last 10 minutes of cooking stir in the combined sour cream, mustard and cornflour. Serve with pasta or noodles and sprinkle with chopped dill leaves.

### Tips for your 40 minute casserole

- Make sure the meat is trimmed of as much visible silver skin as possible.
- Brown the beef in small batches as you do a stir-fry. Ensure the pan is hot when you add the meat, it should sizzle when it goes in.
- Make sure the casserole simmers as it cooks – it must not be allowed to boil or the result will be tough, chewy meat.

Make it quick  
to prepare  
and cook.

Ready to go sauces in the jar or packet can deliver good flavour for quick braise style dishes like this one. Keep in mind these sauce mixes will nearly all have had thickening agents added to them, so you will probably need to add a little extra stock or water to the casserole as it cooks.