

Giouvetsi - Γιουβέτσι (youvetsi)



Giouvetsi, yiouvetsi, or youvetsi is a Greek dish made with chicken, lamb or beef and pasta, either kritharaki or hilopites, and tomato sauce. Other common ingredients include onions/shallots, garlic, beef stock, and red wine. It is characteristically baked in a clay pot, a güveç, and served with grated cheese.

SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	CUISINE
Serves 6	25 minutes	2 hours	2 hours 25 minutes	Greek

Ingredients

- 1.2 kg (2 lb 10 oz) beef chuck or stewing beef, cut into 4 cm (1 1/2 in) pieces
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 large onions, finely diced
- 4 garlic cloves, finely grated
- 2 tbsp tomato purée
- 250 ml (9 fl oz) dry red wine
- 400 g (14 oz) tinned chopped tomatoes
- 500 ml (17 fl oz) hot beef stock



- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp fine salt, plus extra to taste
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 300 g (10 1/2 oz) kritharaki (or orzo)
- 50 g (1 3/4 oz) butter, diced
- 50 g (1 3/4 oz) kefalotyri or Parmesan, finely grated, plus extra to serve

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C fan (180°C/350°F/gas 4). Set a heavy lidded casserole or clay pot on the hob over medium heat.
2. Pat the beef dry and season lightly with salt and pepper. Add 2 tbsp of the olive oil to the pot, then brown the meat in batches over medium-high heat for 6–8 minutes per batch, turning until deeply coloured on all sides; transfer to a plate as it browns.
3. Lower the heat to medium, add the remaining 1 tbsp olive oil, then add the onions. Sweat for 8–10 minutes, stirring often, until soft, translucent and just beginning to colour.
4. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute over medium heat, stirring until fragrant. Stir in the tomato purée and cook for 1–2 minutes until it darkens slightly and smells sweet rather than raw.
5. Pour in the red wine and deglaze the pot, scraping up any browned bits from the base. Simmer over medium heat for 3–4 minutes until reduced by about half and no longer smells sharply alcoholic.
6. Return the beef and any resting juices to the pot. Add the chopped tomatoes, hot stock, cinnamon stick, bay leaves, oregano, salt and pepper, then bring to a gentle simmer over medium heat.
7. Cover and transfer to the oven. Bake for 1 hour 20 minutes, stirring once or twice, until the beef is beginning to turn tender and the sauce has thickened slightly.
8. Stir in the kritharaki and the butter, making sure the pasta is well submerged in the sauce. If needed, add a splash more hot stock or water so the mixture is just loosened and not dry.
9. Cover again and bake for 25–30 minutes more, stirring once halfway through, until the pasta is tender but still has a slight bite and the sauce is thick, glossy and clinging to the meat.
10. Remove from the oven and stir in the grated cheese. Cover loosely and rest for 10 minutes so the giouvetsi settles and the sauce is fully absorbed.
11. Taste and adjust the seasoning, then serve hot with extra cheese at the table.



To serve

Serve the giouvetsi directly from the pot or spoon it into warm shallow bowls, making sure each portion gets plenty of meat, pasta and sauce. Finish with extra grated kefalotyri or Parmesan and a simple green salad; a dry red wine or a glass of robust retsina suits it well.

