

Classic Pot Roast

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS: We started our pot roast by selecting a well-marbled chuck-eye roast. Splitting the roast along its natural seams meant we could trim off excess fat that would have made the finished dish greasy. Working with two smaller roasts instead of one large one also allowed us to cut back on cooking time. To beef up the gravy, we used a combination of water, beef broth, and red wine for the braising liquid. We also added a bit of glutamate-rich tomato paste. In the interest of streamlining, we determined that the initial sear called for in most pot roast recipes wasn't necessary—we found that the “dry” part of the meat that stays above the braising liquid eventually browns, even without searing. Blending the cooked vegetables with the defatted cooking liquid and extra beef broth gave us a full-bodied gravy, which we finished with a spoonful of balsamic vinegar and a bit more wine for brightness.



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Serves 6 to 8

Chilling the whole cooked pot roast overnight improves its flavor and makes it moister and easier to slice.

- 1 (3½- to 4-pound) boneless beef chuck-eye roast, pulled apart at seams and trimmed**
- Kosher salt and pepper**
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- 2 onions, halved and sliced thin**
- 1 large carrot, peeled and chopped**
- 1 celery rib, chopped**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2-3 cups beef broth**
- ¾ cup dry red wine**
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste**
- 1 bay leaf**
- 1 sprig fresh thyme plus ¼ teaspoon chopped**
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar**

1. Season pieces of meat with 1 tablespoon salt, place on wire rack set in rimmed baking sheet, and let stand at room temperature for 1 hour.

2. Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 300 degrees. Melt butter in Dutch oven over medium heat.

Add onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and beginning to brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Add carrot and celery; continue to cook, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in 1 cup broth, ½ cup wine, tomato paste, bay leaf, and thyme sprig; bring to simmer.

3. Pat beef dry with paper towels and season with pepper. Tie 3 pieces of kitchen twine around each piece of meat, creating even shape.

4. Nestle meat on top of vegetables. Cover pot tightly with large piece of aluminum foil and cover with lid; transfer pot to oven. Cook beef until fully tender and fork slips easily in and out of meat, 3½ to 4 hours, turning meat halfway through cooking.

5. Transfer roasts to carving board and tent loosely with foil. Strain liquid through fine-mesh strainer into 4-cup liquid measuring cup. Remove bay leaf and thyme sprig. Transfer vegetables to blender. Let liquid settle for 5 minutes, then skim fat; add beef broth to bring liquid amount to 3 cups. Add liquid to blender and blend until smooth, about 2 minutes. Transfer sauce to medium saucepan and bring to simmer over medium heat.

6. Meanwhile, remove twine from roasts and slice against grain into ½-inch-thick slices. Transfer meat to serving platter. Stir remaining ¼ cup wine, chopped thyme, and vinegar into gravy and season with salt and pepper to taste. Spoon half of gravy over meat and serve, passing remaining gravy separately.