

SICILIAN POT ROAST-II

*Bill Jones
This dish*

12 Plum tomatoes, quartered lengthwise
3 T olive oil
salt and ground black pepper
6 sprigs of thyme

3 lbs beef chuck in 2-inch chunks
½ cup finely chopped fennel bulb
½ cup fine chopped leeks (white only)
1 shallot, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 T flour
12 large Sicilian green olives, pitted and chopped
1 t red chili flakes
1-1/2 cups robust red wine
½ beef stock
3 branches fresh rosemary

Place tomatoes in a bowl, add 1 T oil, season with salt and pepper and toss. Add leaves from 4 branches of thyme, toss again, then spread the tomatoes in a single layer on a foil-lined baking sheet, skin side down. Set aside.

Heat remaining oil in an oven-proof casserole on medium high. Dry meat and sear in several batches to avoid crowding until lightly browned on all sides. Remove to a bowl. Lower heat to medium low. Heat oven to 300 degrees.

Add fennel, leeks, shallot and garlic to casserole, stir, season with salt and pepper and cook until lightly browned. Stir in the flour, cook for a moment or two, then add olives, chile flakes, and wine. Stir, scraping pan, and bring to a simmer. Add stock.

Return meat and its juices to the casserole. Top with branches of rosemary and remaining thyme. Cover and place in the oven. Place the pan of tomatoes in the oven. Cook both for two hours.

Remove the pans from the oven. Check seasonings of meat. Transfer meat and sauce to serving dish, arrange tomatoes on top and serve together.