

# Marrow Bones

Long before South-West Africa became independent, we hunted kudu and gemsbuck on the farm “Hohenvelde” in the Kamanjab<sup>1)</sup> district of what is now Northern Namibia. Every winter we would load the Landrovers and head north to spend three glorious weeks camped out in the shade of a large old Mopani tree. There, for many seasons, we walked and stalked wily kudu bulls and fat gemsbuck, curing our biltong<sup>2)</sup> and dry “wors”<sup>3)</sup> in the shade of the blackthorn trees that surrounded the camp.

Subsisting for three weeks in the veldt on basic campfare is not a tempting proposition. Hunting on foot whilst carrying a heavy calibre rifle over long distances with only an orange for sustenance is energy sapping to say the least, so by the time supper comes around everybody is ravenous. Enter Rhone Haarhoff, a lifelong hunting buddy with one of his favourite recipes. Whilst not difficult to emulate, successful preparation of venison takes time and patience.



When stripping a carcass of its biltong and sausage meat, leave small amounts of meat and tendon around the knuckles at each end of the thighbones. These bones are then sawn in half and packed, open ends up to prevent loss of marrow, into a cast iron pot. A No. 6 three-legged pot takes about twelve halves, sufficient for four hungry hunters. Fill the pot to the brim with water, add some salt, put it onto a bed of hot coals and walk away – leaving it to the camp gillie to top up the water and add coals when the pot stops simmering. By afternoon of the second day, the venison is sufficiently tender for the final touches to be added. Peel ten or so onions and a like number of potatoes, keeping them whole and add to the pot. For seasoning, add a mixture of garlic flakes, ground black peppercorns, and a few whole cloves. Make a liberal mixture of Worcestershire Sauce and fortified sweet wine and pour over the contents of the pot - not forgetting to sample a generous amount of the wine lest it be of inferior quality.

By suppertime most of the water will have boiled away, leaving a gravy that is thick and somewhat oily. Spoon off most of the fat and thicken the remainder with a packet of brown onion soup. Serve with rice or any other form of carbohydrate and a tin of greens for the health conscious.

We were young and hunted on foot. In the process we covered large areas of bush and burnt huge quantities of energy. Doctors and the diet conscious would have been horrified at the quantities of cholesterol we ingested but we returned home fit and healthy and we all lived to hunt another day.

1)

 [Kamanjab](#)

2)

 [Biltong](#)

3)

 [Droëwors](#)

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