**Rognons de Boeuf, Cèpes et Oignons**

- 750 grams (1 2/3 pounds) beef kidneys, preferably organic  
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
- one large handful dried ceps (a.k.a. porcini; substitute other dried mushrooms)  
- olive oil  
- 4 small yellow onions, peeled and thinly sliced  
- fine sea salt  
- 80 ml (1/4 cup) red wine  
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced  
- 3 tablespoons strong Dijon mustard  
- 1 tablespoon crème fraîche or sour cream  
- freshly ground pepper  
- the leaves from a small bunch flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped

Serves 4 -- the recipe may be halved.

Trim the kidneys of any white bit of fat, slice thinly, and transfer to a colander set over the sink. Bring 3 cups water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add the vinegar, stir to combine, and pour over the kidneys in three successive passes, shaking the colander well between each pass. (This blanching step helps soften beef kidneys' flavor and smell.) Rinse under cold water and set aside to drain.

Place the mushrooms in a small heatproof bowl and pour in a little boiling water to just cover them -- don't pour in too much or the sauce will be too thin later. Set aside to plump up.

Heat a little olive oil in a skillet over medium heat, add the onions, cover, and cook until soft and translucent, stirring regularly to prevent coloring. (If you find that the onions are starting to brown, or to stick to the skillet, add a touch of water.) When the onions are cooked, transfer to a bowl, and wipe the skillet with a paper towel.

Return the skillet over medium heat, add a little more olive oil, and when the oil is hot, add the kidneys. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Season with salt. Add the mushrooms with their soaking liquids, the cooked onions, the red wine, and the garlic. Bring to a low simmer and cook for 10 more minutes, uncovered.

Stir in the mustard and cream, and cook for a minute longer (if you're using sour cream, be very careful not to let the mixture boil again, otherwise the cream will curdle). Sprinkle liberally with pepper, taste, and adjust the seasoning. Serve over fresh pasta or mashed potatoes, and garnish with chopped parsley.

