

THIS IS ATLANTA COOKING

Presented by PBA 30

Braised Lamb Shanks

Cook time- About three hours

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium onion chopped
2 stalks celery chopped
1 large carrot, chopped
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
8 whole cloves garlic
2 tablespoons tomato paste
4 lamb shanks (about 1 ½ pounds each)
4 cups burgundy red wine
2-3 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
2-3 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
About 10 cups chicken or beef broth, homemade or low sodium canned

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven or deep ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add the onion, celery, carrot, and season with 2 teaspoons salt and pepper to taste. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender and just beginning to brown, about 20 minutes. Add the garlic and tomato paste, mix well and cook until the tomato paste darkens, about 3 minutes.

Salt and pepper the lamb shanks and sear them until brown on all sides in a large saute' pan (you may need to do two shanks at a time). Lay them in a single layer, over the vegetables in the Dutch oven. Pour excess fat/oil out of the pan used for searing the shanks; add red wine to the pan and scrape pan while wine is simmering. Add wine to Dutch oven. Add enough stock to surround but not cover the shanks and bring to a simmer. Sprinkle rosemary and sage over the lamb shanks. Transfer to the oven. Braise the shanks, covered, turning every 30 minutes or so, until the meat is fork tender, about 2 hours. Remove from the oven and place the lamb shanks on a serving dish to hold temporarily.

Skim the fat from the surface of the braising liquid. Simmer the sauce until reduced by about half or when the sauce has thickened. Return the shanks to the sauce, and warm gently over low heat. Taste the sauce and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper to taste. Remove the lamb shanks and place on serving plates and ladle the sauce over the lamb shanks and serve.

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Blackened Chicken Penne Pasta with Blue Cheese Cream Sauce

Serves two

2 8-ounce boneless skinless chicken breasts
1 stick margarine, melted
2-3 tbsp. blackening spice
1 tbsp. chopped garlic
1 cup julienne red onions
_ cu julienne red peppers
_ cup julienne green peppers
salt and pepper to taste
4 ounces white wine
4 ounces chicken broth
1 cup heavy cream
_ cup blue cheese crumbles
2 ounces olive oil
_ to 1 pound cooked penne pasta

Heat a large skillet until very hot. While skillet is heating, place chicken breasts on a plate and dredge with melted butter and coat with blackening spice all over. Lay the chicken breasts in the skillet and cook until dark brown or almost burned on each side. Remove the chicken from the pan and cool on a plate. When the chicken cools, slice into strips.

Heat large skillet to medium heat with olive oil and simmer garlic. Add onions, red and green peppers, and chicken. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add white wine and reduce mixture until wine has evaporated by half. Add chicken broth and reduce again by half, then add heavy cream. When cream begins to simmer, add half the blue cheese crumbles and melt into sauce. Add penne pasta and simmer dish until pasta is hot and cream has reduced to a thick consistency. Serve in large bowls and garnish with remaining blue cheese crumbles.

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Blueberry Bread Pudding

Custard:

- 4 cups whole milk
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 6 large eggs
- 4 large egg yolks

- 1 large loaf Brioche or other sweet bread or white rolls
- 1 pint blueberries
- 8 cup baking dish

Preheat oven to 300° F.

For the custard, pour the milk, vanilla, and half the sugar into a non-reactive, 2-quart heavy-bottomed saucepan. Heat the milk on medium-high heat. Scald the milk mixture by heating it until bubbles start to form around the edge of the pan. Remove from heat.

Place the remaining sugar, the whole eggs, and egg yolks in a large mixing bowl and whisk until well incorporated. When you add sugar to eggs (especially to egg yolks), it is important to create an emulsion quickly or else a chemical reaction that produces heat will occur. If you do not whisk immediately, this heat will cook the egg yolks and cause lumps in the custard. Continue to whisk while slowly pouring the hot milk into the egg mixture and whisking until the mixture is smooth and homogenous in color. Try not to create air bubbles on the surface of the custard when you whisk, as these can form a crust on the baked custard. Pour the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve to remove any overcooked eggs.

Evenly distribute the blueberries on the bottom of the baking dish. Slice the bread into $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick slices and remove the crust. Dice each slice into $\frac{1}{2}$ " cubes. Fill the baking dish about half-full with the bread cubes. Fill the dish half-full with the custard and allow the bread to absorb the custard for about 15 minutes. Fill the baking dish to the top with the custard. It is important to fill the dish completely since the custard loses volume as it bakes.

Traditionally, custard is baked in a hot water bath to insulate it from the direct heat of the oven and to keep the eggs from cooking too fast, which would cause them to separate. Use hot water from the tap and pour enough water into the roasting pan to reach halfway up the side of the baking dish. When baked correctly, the custard should tremble slightly when gently shaken. In a conventional oven, this should take about 1 hour. If you detect any liquid under the skin, the custard is under-baked. Put it back in the oven and shake it every 5 minutes until it is ready. If the custard begins to bubble during baking, reduce the oven temperature by 25°F (14°C).

Remove the pudding from the oven and the water bath and place on a wire rack for 30 minutes.

Refrigerate for 2 hours before serving. It will finish setting in the refrigerator.

Cut desired sized portion and remove each portion with a spatula to a serving dish. If you like, heat the bread pudding in the microwave before serving. I like to top the bread pudding with blueberry sauce and vanilla ice cream.

Blueberry Sauce:

- 1 pint fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1 cup water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 1 tsp. lemon juice

Simmer all ingredients in saucepan until sugar is dissolved. Serve warm, or cool before serving.