

Rachel Allen's Lamb Recipes

Tagine of Lamb

Ballymaloe Cookery School Tagine of Lamb with ` Medjool Dates Serves 6

- 1.35kg (3 lbs) boned shoulder of lamb
- 1/2 tablespoon (1/2 American tablespoon + 1/2 teaspoon) ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- generous pinch saffron
- 50g (2oz/1/2 stick) butter
- 2 onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 300ml (10fl oz/1/2 pint) tomato juice
- salt
- 110 - 175g (4-6oz) Medjool dates
- 2 tablespoons (2 American tablespoons + 2 teaspoons) chopped coriander
- 1 tablespoon (1 American tablespoon + 1 teaspoon) oil (optional)
- 50g (2oz) flaked almonds
- fresh coriander leaves
- thick natural yoghurt

Trim the lamb, discarding excess fat. Cut into 1 1/2 inch (4cm) cubes. Mix cinnamon, paprika, ginger, pepper and saffron with 4 tablespoons water. Toss the lamb in this mixture. If you have time, leave to marinade for up to 24 hours.

Melt the butter in a wide pan. Add the lamb, onions, garlic, tomato juice, salt and enough water to come half way up the meat. Bring up to the boil, cover and reduce heat to a gentle simmer. Cook for about 45 minutes, turning the lamb occasionally until the meat is meltingly tender. Add the dates, and coriander. Continue simmering for a further 30 minutes or so, uncovered until the sauce is thick and unctuous. Taste and adjust seasoning.

Fry the almonds in the oil if using until almost golden brown. Drain on kitchen paper. Sprinkle almonds and remaining coriander over the lamb just before serving.

Serve with couscous and a bowl a thick natural yoghurt.

Lamb shanks with haricot beans, tomatoes and rosemary

Serves 4

You will need:

- 120g dried haricot beans OR 1 tin of haricot beans
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 lamb shanks
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 onions, sliced
- 4 large cloves of garlic, crushed or grated
- 1 tin tomatoes
- 1-2 teaspoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons chopped rosemary

1. *Place the dried haricot beans in a bowl, cover well with cold water and allow to soak for at least 6 hours, or overnight. After soaking the beans, drain off the water and cover with fresh water in a saucepan and boil for 45-60 minutes, until tender. Drain but reserve the cooking water. If using a tin of haricot beans just open it up, drain the beans and reserve the liquid.*

2. *Preheat the oven to 170°C/150°Fan/325°F/Gas 3.*

3. *Place a large saucepan or casserole pot over a high heat and allow to heat up. When the pot is nice and hot add in the olive oil and then lay the shanks in a single layer. Brown the shanks all over, seasoning with salt and pepper as you go. When the shanks are nice and golden take them out of the pot and if there are any burnt bits in the pan, wipe them out. Place the pan back on the heat and if necessary, add a little more olive oil. Add in the onions and garlic and season with salt and pepper. Turn the heat down to low and cover with a lid. Cook the onions and garlic for 8-10 minutes until tender, then add in the tinned tomatoes and the sugar, followed by the drained cooked beans and half of the chopped rosemary. Lay the lamb shanks on top followed by 250ml of the bean liquid.*

4. *Bring up to a gentle boil then transfer to the preheated oven and cook for 2 and a half to 3 hours until the lamb is meltingly tender and almost falling off the bone.*

5. *Stir in the remaining teaspoon of chopped rosemary and taste the sauce for seasoning. Serve with creamy mash or just a delicious green salad.*

Lamb chops with olive and anchovy tapenade

Serves 4

- 50g anchovy fillets
 - 100g stoned black olives
 - 1 tablespoon capers
 - 1 teaspoon mustard
 - 1 teaspoon lemon juice
 - freshly ground pepper
 - 2-3 tablespoons olive oil
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- 2-3 lamb chops per person
 - Olive oil
 - Salt and pepper

Whizz up the anchovy fillets (preferably in a food processor) with the stoned black olives, capers, mustard, lemon juice, and pepper.

Alternatively, chop all the ingredients well, or use a pestle and mortar. Add the olive oil as you mix and process to a coarse or smooth puree as you prefer.

Place a grill pan or frying pan on a medium heat and allow to get very hot. Then turn the heat up to high and cook the lamb chops on either side until deep golden around the edges and season with salt and pepper. Cook for just a few minutes on either side if you want them pink, or a bit longer for well done lamb.

Serve with the anchovy and olive tapenade and some boiled new potatoes.