

Arabian Lamb Shanks

(Serves 3 - 4 persons)

(Adapted from a recipe by Alex Hollywood.)

This meal is truly sumptuous, full of flavour and warming, and not spicy hot! I made the full recipe for four people and then froze the remaining two portions. The original recipe stated "Four Lamb Shanks" with no indication of size! So I have worked out an alternative - 2 large lamb shanks is sufficient for 3 or four people, removing the bone when serving; OR four smaller lamb shanks, one for each person with the bone still intact, though the meat might well fall off the bone when serving! (For two people just halve everything!!)

Before you start cooking make sure you have a large enough pan, casserole dish, or slow cooker for the amount and size of lamb shanks you are using.

Alternatively you could use diced lamb, being the equivalent of the meat on the shanks!

Note: the spoon levels are not heaped but should be level.

Ingredients:

4 Lamb shanks with any excess fat removed,
1 tablespoon of olive oil,
1 medium onion finely chopped,
3 teaspoons ground cumin,
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg,
1 teaspoon of ground or crushed black peppercorns,
1 teaspoon ground turmeric,
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon,
Salt (to taste),
2 chopped garlic cloves,
4cm (1 1/2") grated ginger,
2 carrots chopped into chunks or slices depending on size,(optional),
2 tablespoons of red lentils, (optional),
2 tablespoons of pearl barley and peas mix, (optional),
500ml (18fl. oz.) warmed lamb or chicken stock. (190ml = 1 oxo cube)

Method:

Preheat the oven to 150degrees, fan 130degrees, or gas 2 (Casserole dish).

Heat the olive oil on a low light in a shallow frying pan and fry the chopped onion until soft but not brown.

Stir in the cumin, nutmeg, crushed or ground peppercorns, turmeric, cinnamon, and a good pinch of salt to taste. Stir to absorb all the oil and juice from the onions. Add the crushed garlic, grated ginger and the stock and stir.

Pour this mixture all over the lamb shanks in either a casserole dish (cook in the oven - preheated as above), or a slow cooker (low setting), or in a large pan on the hob on a very low light. Add in the lentils, pearl barley and the carrots and mix in. Cook for about three hours, on these low settings, stirring from time to time. If the mixture does not cover the lamb shanks turn them over half way through the cooking time.

Before serving: The original recipe stated that if the sauce was too runny thicken it by reducing the sauce over a medium heat until it reduces. I found that this will limit the amount of sauce available and will make the sauce taste too strong. I preferred to thicken it with a loose paste made from 2 heaped teaspoons of (Bisto) gravy powder mixed with 1 heaped teaspoon of cornflour, and then added to the sauce a little at a time continually stirring to avoid any lumps forming. Increase the heat slightly during this process. (Repeat if the sauce is still too runny.)

Serving:

There are many ways this can be served up. Chopped fresh coriander and mint can be sprinkled on top, along with pomegranate seeds and natural yoghurt.

It can also be served with hot pitta bread, or hot naan bread, or potatoes and greens, or on a bed of boiled rice or pilau rice.

For more of my own home-made favourite recipes go to:
www.davidsemporium.co.uk/recipesindex.html