



SLOW-COOKED SPICED LAMB SHANKS

WITH PRESERVED LEMON YOGHURT AND CORIANDER
Recipe by Sophie Hansen

Serves 8

Oh, the goodness of these lamb shanks on a cold evening! Correction: oh, the goodness of somebody making you these lamb shanks to reheat and eat on a cold evening, curled up on the couch with a blanket and some nice company (be it a person or a good movie). Make a big batch of these and enjoy them as whole shanks or shred the meat and serve as a ragu with pearl couscous. Or bake the shanks under a blanket of puff pastry, sprinkled with nigella seeds. They're also great done in a slow cooker.

Ingredients

LAMB SHANKS

1/3 cup (80 ml) olive oil
8 lamb shanks
2 brown onions, finely diced
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
4 cm (1 1/2 inch) piece ginger, finely chopped
1 bunch coriander (cilantro), stalks and roots finely chopped, leaves reserved for garnish
1 Tbsp ground cumin
1 Tbsp ground cardamom
1 Tbsp smoked paprika
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp sea salt
1 cup (250 ml) chicken or vegetable stock
2 x 400 g (14 oz) tins chopped tomatoes
8 dried figs
1/3 cup (80 ml) pomegranate molasses

PRESERVED LEMON YOGHURT

4 pieces preserved lemon rind, finely chopped
1/2 cup (130 g) Greek-style yoghurt

Method

Preheat the oven to 150°C (300°F).

Heat some of the olive oil in a large heavy-based saucepan over high heat. Brown the lamb shanks, two or three at a time, for a few minutes on each side or until golden brown, adding more olive oil as necessary. Transfer all of the lamb shanks to a deep roasting tin and set aside.

Reduce the heat, add a little more oil to the pan and cook the onion, stirring often, for 10 minutes or until completely soft. Add the garlic, ginger, coriander stalks and roots, spices and salt to the pan and cook for 5 more minutes. Pour in the stock and tomatoes, then bring to the boil and cook for 5 minutes. Check and adjust the seasoning. Pour the sauce over the lamb shanks, tightly cover the roasting tin with foil and place in the oven for 3 hours or until the meat is lovely and tender.

(Alternatively, transfer the lamb shanks and sauce to a slow cooker and cook on low heat for 5 hours. Add the figs and pomegranate molasses and cook for a further 1 hour.)

Remove the roasting tin from the oven and discard the foil. Tuck the dried figs among the lamb shanks and drizzle with the pomegranate molasses. Increase the heat to 180°C (350°F) and return the lamb shanks to the oven for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, to make the preserved lemon yoghurt, simply mix the two ingredients together and season with a good grinding of black pepper.

At this point, you can either transfer the lamb shanks to a container to freeze or chill, or serve on a bed of sweet potato mash, couscous or rice. Finish with a dollop of the preserved lemon yoghurt and the reserved coriander leaves.



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*Images and recipes from A Basket by the Door by Sophie Hansen, Murdoch Books, RRP \$39.99 Photography: Sophie Hansen, except page 249 by Lina Hayes.