

Lamb shoulder with beans

Yes, there's a fair amount of soaking, curing and marinading going on here, but it's all well worth the effort — plus none of it requires much in the way of actual hands-on work, anyway.

Preparation — 20 minutes

Cure— 6 hours

Marinate — 12 hours

Cook— 5.5 hours

Serves — 4

Ingredients

For the lamb

1.2-1.5kg bone-in lamb shoulder

100g table salt

1.5 tsp rosemary leaves

1.5 tsp thyme leaves

1 tsp finely chopped garlic

Vegetable oil, for searing

4 cloves new season garlic

1 litre lamb stock

For the marinade

50ml extra-virgin olive oil

0.5 tsp esepette pepper

0.5 tsp paprika

50ml vegetable oil

For the beans

400g flageolet beans

50g finely chopped shallot

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

8-10 bay leaves

3 tsp thyme leaves

1 litre chicken stock

Method

- Put the lamb shoulder in a suitable dish in which it fits snugly, rub all over with the salt, rosemary, thyme and chopped garlic (having removed the germ), then cover, refrigerate and leave to cure for six hours.
- Wash the cured lamb, then dry well with a clean tea towel or kitchen cloth. Heat a little vegetable oil in a large, heavy-based frying pan or casserole, then sear the lamb shoulder until well coloured all over. Make eight deep cuts all over the seared lamb and push the halved new-season garlic cloves into the slits. Put the lamb back in the same dish, add all the ingredients for the marinade, toss to coat, then cover again, return to the fridge and leave to marinate for 12 hours.
- Put the lamb and all its marinade in a large, cast-iron pot for which you have a lid, then pour in enough lamb stock to come halfway up the sides of the meat. Cover the pot and roast in a very low oven – 140°C (120°C fan) – for five to six hours, until the lamb is very tender and all but falling off the bone. Take out of the oven and turn up the heat to 180°C (160°C fan). Baste the lamb in the pan juices until it is well coated,

then return to the oven uncovered for another 15 minutes, basting regularly with the pan juices, until the liquid reduces and the lamb is nicely browned and glazed.

- After the lamb has been cooking for three to three and a half hours, drain the soaked beans and put them in an oven tray (ideally one for which you have a lid). Add the shallot, celery, garlic, bay and thyme, pour over the chicken stock, cover the tray (either with a lid or a thick double layer of foil) and bake alongside the lamb for 90 minutes. After the beans have had 45 minutes, season with salt, stir and finish off cooking. Just before serving, adjust the seasoning to taste.
- Spoon the cooked beans on to a big platter and top with the lamb, either carved or whole to be carved at the table. Spoon over a generous amount of the cooking juices, take to the table and serve.