

Churston Traditional

FARM SHOP

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CHURSTON FARM SHOP RECIPES APRIL 2017

Whatever the extent to which supermarkets with their constant availability of food have bleached out all idea of seasonality from the national diet one or two traditional beacons still shine proudly.

For most people it wouldn't be Christmas unless there was turkey on the table or, equally, Easter if they weren't eating lamb, indissolubly linked in dozens of countries with the major Christian festival of the year.

On the other hand few if any of those countries will have access to the quality of grass-fed lamb we raise in the South West. There has been plenty of scientific research to demonstrate precisely why grass-fed lamb is better for us but those of us who have always enjoyed it don't need to be told any more.

It is, quite simply, in a class of its own and as any cook knows when you start out with top-quality ingredients achieving impressive results is considerably easier.

We're going for saddle of lamb in these recipes: a joint which delivers perfectly-cooked results because of its covering of fat and which provides the perfect centrepiece for an Easter lunch.

SADDLE OF LAMB WITH SAGE CRUMBLE TOPPING

Ingredients for four to six. One boned and rolled saddle of lamb weighing about 1.2kg, 100g home-made white breadcrumbs, 80g softened butter, two tablespoons finely-chopped fresh sage, one chopped garlic clove, tablespoon olive oil, sea salt and freshly-ground black pepper.

Method. Remove the lamb from the fridge an hour before starting to cook. Spread the breadcrumbs on a baking sheet and toast in a moderate oven until pale golden brown. Once cool, place in a processor with the butter, sage and garlic and whizz to a paste. Heat the oven to 200C gas mark 6. Heat the oil in a large frying pan, season the lamb well and brown on all sides for about 10-12 minutes. Transfer to a roasting pan, spread the sage mix evenly over the top and roast for 40 minutes. Allow to rest for 10 minutes before serving.

BRAISED SADDLE OF LAMB

Ingredients for four to six. One boned and rolled saddle of lamb weighing about 1.4kg, litre of chicken stock, two whole heads of garlic, three or four four-inch sprigs of fresh rosemary, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper.

Method. Remove the lamb from the fridge an hour before starting to cook. Peel eight of the garlic cloves, use the point of a sharp knife to make slits in the lamb at regular intervals and insert a whole clove into each. Season the lamb very well all over. Heat the oil in a close-fitting casserole, add the lamb and brown well all over. Add the remainder of the garlic, unpeeled, the rosemary and the stock, bring to the boil then reduce the heat and simmer for an hour and a half, basting the lamb regularly. Serve with baby new potatoes, halved, tossed in olive oil and butter and pan-braised for 12 minutes with some of the cooking juices from the meat.

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