

*Churston Traditional*

# **FARM SHOP**

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## **CHURSTON FARM SHOP RECIPES APRIL 2019**

At last Easter is in sight – and if previous years are anything to go by our lamb sales will soar as a result. Of course we're not the only country which makes a big thing of lamb at Easter. Most Christian countries do, especially Greece. In fact the Greeks make a big thing of Easter generally, particularly on the island of Kalymnos where opposing gangs throw sticks of dynamite off the towering cliffs at the entrance to Pothia harbour. This quaint tradition has led, over the years, to the abrupt annihilation of celebrants who have lit the fuse but haven't been quick enough to sling the dynamite stick into the void – the sort of mistake no-one makes twice. Anyway for your Easter celebrations here are two lamb recipes, one Greek the other from south-eastern France, plus a way of making the most delicious cake you will ever taste.

### **GREEK-STYLE LAMB WITH POTATOES AND LEMONS**

Ingredients for six to eight. One lamb shoulder, large sprig rosemary, four tablespoons olive oil, half bottle dry white wine, two crushed garlic cloves, kilo waxy potatoes, five large lemons, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper, tablespoon dried oregano.

Method. The day before you plan to eat pull the leaves off the rosemary and with the point of a small, sharp knife make slits in the skin of the lamb at regular intervals and insert them. Mix the oil, wine, garlic and a quarter teaspoon of salt in a large plastic bag, add the lamb shoulder, massage the mix well into the meat then tie up and refrigerate overnight. Heat the oven to 220 gas mark 7, place the meat on a rack over a large roasting pan and roast for 45 minutes. Remove from the oven and reduce the heat to 190C gas mark 5. Halve the potatoes lengthways and quarter four of the lemons. Place in a large bowl, season with salt, add a generous glug of olive oil and the oregano, mix well, spread in the roasting pan, replace the meat on its rack and roast for a further hour. Squeeze half the juice of the remaining lemon over the lamb and allow to rest for 15 minutes, transfer the potatoes and lemon quarters to a warm serving dish and sprinkle with the last of the lemon juice and keep warm until time to serve.

### **LAMB SHANKS WITH ORANGE AND CHOCOLATE**

Ingredients for six. Six lamb shanks, two carrots, six banana shallots, grated zest of an orange, stick of celery, one head of garlic, bouquet garni of thyme, parsley and bay leaf, 50g butter, 750ml chicken stock made with three capsules, 250ml red wine, 30g flour, 20g dark chocolate (at least 70 per cent cocoa solids), three tablespoons olive oil, two tablespoons each tomato puree and balsamic vinegar, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper.

Method. Roughly chop the carrots and finely chop the celery, cut the garlic in two horizontally and peel the shallots. Heat the oil in a very large casserole and brown the shanks for 10 to 12 minutes, two at a time, turning frequently to get an even colour. Reserve in a warm place and heat the oven to 120C gas mark 3. Add the garlic and the shallots to the pan and cook for a couple of minutes then add the carrots, celery and bouquet garni and cook for a further three minutes. Sprinkle with flour, then add the tomato concentrate and the wine little by little, incorporating any residues from the bottom of the pan using a wooden spatula. Stir in the stock, replace the shanks, cover and place in the oven for two and a half hours. Remove and transfer the shanks to a dish then place the casserole over a medium heat and reduce the sauce by half. Add the chocolate, butter and vinegar and replace the shanks. Check seasoning, sprinkle the shanks with the orange zest and serve.

### **GREEK WALNUT CAKE**

Ingredients. 280g double cream, 320g whole milk, 250g olive oil, 300g caster sugar, 500g crushed walnuts, 300g self-raising flour, two heaped teaspoons each cinnamon and baking powder, six eggs, two teaspoons vanilla extract, pinch of salt. For the syrup: 500g sugar, 600g water, one cinnamon stick, bay leaf, two cloves, cardamom pod.

Method. Heat the oven to 180C gas mark 4 and butter the base and sides of a nine inch by 13 inch baking dish. Beat the eggs and sugar together for a few minutes until thick and pale. Add the olive oil, cream and milk and beat well to incorporate. Into another bowl, sift the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt. Slowly add them to the egg mixture while gently whisking just until incorporated and the batter is smooth. Toss the walnuts with a tablespoon of flour to prevent them sinking to the bottom of the cake, fold them in gently with a spatula and pour the batter into the dish. Bake for 45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Meanwhile place all the syrup ingredients in a saucepan and bring to the boil while stirring then reduce the heat and simmer over a medium heat until slightly thickened. Allow to cool. As soon as the cake is done, remove it from the oven and pierce it all over with a toothpick. Drizzle the syrup over the top slowly to allow it to be absorbed. The golden rule is either to pour cold syrup over a warm cake or if the cake has cooled heat the syrup and pour over while warm.

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