

Churston Traditional

FARM SHOP

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CHURSTON FARM SHOP RECIPES MAY 2019

We've had a real run on lamb during the spring which is hardly surprising, given that the quality has been particularly good this year. But aside from the traditional roasting joints lamb offers particularly good value all year round.

And although its flavour is subtle it can stand up to all kinds of cooking treatment. So here are a couple of ideas, but with summer rather than winter cooking in mind – though if the weather doesn't tempt you to drag out and clean off the barbecue yet the brochettes will do equally well under a medium-hot grill.

The tagine is Moroccan-inspired. Ras-el-hanout seasoning is easily available: the word means 'top of the shop' and is actually a spice blend traditionally offering a selection of the finest from the spice merchant's shelves. Moroccan spice merchants still prepare their own blends from jealously guarded recipes, many with more than 20 ingredients including, among other things, dried rose petals. But the emphasis is always on subtle flavours rather than searing heat. If you prefer your tagines to have a bit of a kick the traditional method is to mix a teaspoon of harissa paste with three or four tablespoons of the cooking liquid just before serving and hand it round separately in a bowl. But beware: harissa can be fearsomely hot...

LAMB BROCHETTES

Ingredients for eight. 700g lean shoulder lamb cut into small cubes, one red and one green pepper, two small courgettes, two small onions. Two tablespoons each red wine, balsamic vinegar and olive oil, two crushed and finely chopped garlic cloves, tablespoon redcurrant jelly, tablespoon fresh chopped rosemary and mint.

Method. In a large bowl whisk together the wine, vinegar, oil, garlic, jelly and herbs, add the meat, turn well to coat, cover with film and refrigerate for four hours. Meanwhile place eight wooden skewers to soak in a jug of water. Cut the peppers into small chunks, the courgettes into thin slices, peel the onions, quarter vertically and separate the segments. When ready to cook thread meat and vegetables onto the skewer always making sure there is a piece of onion next to a piece of meat and barbecue for four to five minutes, turning frequently and brushing with any remaining marinade.

LAMB TAGINE

Ingredients for four to six. 900g lean shoulder of lamb, cut into chunks, eight fresh apricots, olive oil, one large Spanish onion, finely chopped, bunch baby carrots, cut into small chunks, three teaspoons ras-el-hanout seasoning, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper, tablespoon ground almonds, 200g couscous, 30g butter, level teaspoon salt.

Method. If you haven't got a traditional tagine then a large saucepan will do. Heat the oil and sweat the onion and carrots for a few minutes then add the meat, spices, salt and pepper and fry for eight to ten minutes, stirring frequently to avoid sticking. Add the ground almonds and enough water to cover and finally the halved and destoned apricots. Cover and simmer very gently for an hour and a quarter. Place the couscous in a large bowl, add the butter and salt and fork in boiling water until the grains start to become fluffy. Transfer to a muslin square, tie up like a pudding, place in a colander and set over the lamb, cover then simmer for a further 15 minutes.

DEVILLED KIDNEYS

Ingredients for four. Eight lamb kidneys, skinned, tablespoon English mustard powder, teaspoon each sea salt and freshly-ground black pepper, 75g butter, two tablespoons port.

Method. Split the kidneys, using a sharp knife to cut in towards the core, but leave the two halves just attached. Use two cocktail sticks to keep each one perfectly flat. Make light cuts in them then toss them in the mixed mustard, salt and pepper. Heat the butter in a large frying pan until sizzling, add the kidneys, cook for a minute on each side then turn the heat down and cook gently for another four minutes, turning occasionally. Remove the kidneys, drain off any excess fat. Return the kidneys to the pan, add the port and bubble down for a minute or two. Serve on thick slices of toast or fried bread with a little of the cooking liquid drizzled over.

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