

Algerian Lamb Shanks

This recipe is adapted from one published by [Williams Sonoma](#) several years ago. The combination of orange and wine with pungent spices makes for a heady dish best served over couscous or rice and accompanied by a strong red wine.

Lamb shanks are always in short supply around Dunhill Ranch, so I have occasionally made this recipe with lamb shoulder. Even so, it's still really good.

Serves 4

Ingredients

4 lamb shanks
4 Tbs olive oil
1 lb. yellow onions, diced
¼ cup peeled garlic cloves
1 Tbs finely chopped fresh ginger
2 cardamom pods peeled or 1/8 tsp ground
1 tsp chili flakes
1 tsp ground cloves
1 tsp caraway seeds
2 tsp fennel seeds
½ cinnamon stick
2 tsp salt
2 Tbs curry powder
½ cup blanched slivered almonds
½ cup golden raisins (regular raisins will do)
20 oz diced tomatoes (canned will do)
1 bottle white wine (minus a bit to drink while cooking)
Zest and juice of 1 orange
1 lb. carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped
1 fennel bulb, trimmed and coarsely chopped

Technique

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Season the lamb shanks with salt and pepper. In a deep, heavy, ovenproof pot heat 2 Tbs of olive oil until nearly smoking. Brown the shanks on all sides. Set aside.
3. At this point, if you are lucky, your pot will have all kinds of browned bits sticking to it. This is good. If, as sometimes has happened to me, the browned bits have turned black, clean them out of the pot before continuing.
4. Add the remaining 2 Tbs olive oil and the onions and garlic to the pot. Cook on medium high heat, stirring frequently, until the onions are tender and translucent.
5. Add all of the spices and the almonds and raisins to the pot and cook for about 5 minutes more.

6. Add the tomatoes, wine, orange zest and orange juice and stir to mix well. Put the shanks in the liquid and bring to a simmer. Cover, transfer the pot to the oven, and cook until the meat nearly falls off the bone, about 2 hours. Check the pot occasionally to make sure that the liquid has not all simmered away. If it looks a bit dry, add some water.
7. Stir the carrots and fennel bulb into the stew, cover and bake until the vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes more.
8. Serve over couscous or rice and drizzle each serving with olive oil.