

Churston Traditional

FARM SHOP

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CHURSTON FARM SHOP RECIPES MARCH 2019

It's around this time of year that we normally think of eating new season's lamb, what with all its connotations with Easter. Well, Easter has decided to be late this year – its place in the calendar is still fixed according to the phases of the moon, oddly enough. But that doesn't mean we have to wait until April to enjoy top-quality, grass-fed lamb – and all the indications are that this year's quality is going to be really exceptional. Lamb's versatility seems to know no limits. Apart from our home-grown favourites you can eat your way around the Mediterranean from Morocco to Greece and Italy and encounter dozens and dozens of ways of cooking it, often with fruit – a technique the Crusaders noted and brought back to this country to bequeath us the original mince pies. Although it may be fashionable to cook lamb pink so it's the same colour as the restaurant crockery we always prefer ours slow-cooked, a method which really gives those complex, grassy flavours a chance to develop. So a couple of ideas for that first, plus a way of using up what's left over from the Sunday roast.

LAMB TAGINE

Ingredients for four. 750g lean shoulder of lamb, cut into chunks, eight no-soak dried apricots, olive oil, one large Spanish onion, finely chopped, bunch baby carrots, cut into small chunks, teaspoon each ground cumin, coriander and cinnamon, half a teaspoon ground ginger, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper, tablespoon ground almonds. Method. Heat the oil in a tagine or casserole 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 apricots. If using a tagine set over a low flame and simmer for an hour and a half or for a casserole place in an oven preheated to 180C gas mark 4 for the same length of time.

SLOW ROAST LAMB WITH ROSEMARY AND GARLIC

Ingredients for four to six. One whole shoulder of lamb, couple of branches of rosemary, three or four garlic cloves, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper, tablespoon redcurrant jelly. Method. Pull the sprigs off the rosemary and peel the garlic and cut into slivers. With the blade of a small, sharp knife make incisions all over the lamb and insert the rosemary sprigs and garlic slivers, spacing them out evenly. Season the lamb well, wrap in two layers of foil and make several small slits in the underside. Set on a rack over a roasting pan and roast at 180C gas mark 4 for three hours – you can place some peeled whole onions to roast underneath it halfway through. Open up the foil with scissors, brush the top of the lamb with the redcurrant jelly, raise the heat to 210C gas mark 6 and roast for a further 30 minutes.

LAMB BHUNA

Ingredients for four. 400-600g cooked lamb in chunks, two tablespoons sunflower oil, two medium onions, finely chopped, two crushed garlic cloves, two tomatoes, skinned and chopped, tablespoon malt vinegar, half a teaspoon each chilli powder and turmeric, teaspoon each ground coriander and garam masala, 50g creamed coconut and a teaspoon of salt. Method. Place the onions, garlic, tomatoes and vinegar in a food processor and whizz to a paste. Heat the oil in a saucepan and fry the paste for a minute, stirring frequently. Add the chilli powder, turmeric, coriander and garam masala and fry for three to four minutes, stirring continuously. Add the creamed coconut and salt, cover and simmer gently over a very low heat for 20 minutes, adding a little water if the mix appears too dry. Add the lamb and cook gently for a further 15 minutes before serving.

Churston Farm Shop Dartmouth Rd, Brixham TQ5 0LL

Tel: 01803 845837 | Email: postmaster@churstontraditionalfarmshop.org.uk