



SWEET BASIL'S LAMB OSSO BUCCO

SERVES 4 TO 6 ★ PREP TIME: ABOUT 4 HOURS

CHEF DAVE BECKER SAYS: “I absolutely love braised meat of any kind. This recipe is as rustic as it gets—and the most labor intensive one in my cookbook—but the end result is very gratifying. Not only will you eat a rich and flavorful meal, your entire house will smell like the delicious osso bucco sauce for the rest of the night.”

Preheat the oven to 350°.

In a shallow bowl, combine the flour, dried sage, dried rosemary, and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Evenly coat the lamb shanks with the seasoned flour. Set aside.

In an extra-large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil over high heat until smoking hot. Lay the lamb in the skillet, searing on all sides until dark brown. Transfer the lamb to a casserole dish just big enough to allow the shanks to lay flat. Set aside.

Wipe the skillet clean, and then heat the remaining tablespoon of olive oil over moderate heat. Add the carrots, sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, and then add the onions, celery, and garlic. Continue sautéing for 5 to 10 minutes, until the vegetables are dark and caramelized. Decrease the heat to moderate, and then add the tomatoes, port, and bay leaf. Bring the liquid to a boil and continue cooking for 5 minutes, or until all of the alcohol has evaporated.

Cover the lamb with the wine sauce and the chicken stock and lightly season with salt and pepper. Cover the casserole dish with aluminum foil and place on the bottom rack in the oven. Allow the lamb to braise for 3½ hours, or until the lamb is fork tender.

Transfer the lamb to a serving platter. Skim the layer of fat from the sauce. Pour the remaining sauce into a large saucepan, and then reduce one-third of the liquid over high heat. Swirl in the butter and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Ladle the sauce over the lamb, and then garnish with the Asiago and the parsley. Serve immediately.

All-purpose flour, for dusting

Pinch dried sage, for dusting

Pinch dried rosemary, for dusting

Kosher salt and cracked black pepper

4 large lamb shanks

3 tablespoons olive oil

2 carrots, peeled and diced (about 2 cups)

2 large Spanish onions, diced (about 4 cups)

2 stalks celery, diced (about 1 cup)

2 cloves garlic, minced (about 2 tablespoons)

6 plum tomatoes, diced (about 3 cups)

4 cups port wine

1 bay leaf

2 cups chicken stock, or enough to cover lamb shanks

3 tablespoons unsalted butter

Grated Asiago cheese, for garnish

Chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

Note:

★ This recipe can be prepared with either lamb or veal. Lamb is a little bit cheaper and more fun to look at, though.