

CABERNET AND BALSAMIC BRAISED LAMB SHANKS WITH LEMON GREMOLATA

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2006 Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley Proprietary Red Wine

INGREDIENTS:

6 lamb shanks, about 1 pound each	8 parsley stems
Kosher salt & freshly cracked pepper	6 Roma tomatoes, cut into 1/8's
½ cup duck fat (sub vegetable oil if fat is not available)	2 cups Cabernet
2 onions, peeled & finely sliced	1 cup Balsamic Vinegar
2 carrots, diced medium	2 cups Veal or beef stock (or use canned broth)
2 stalks celery, diced medium	zest from 2 lemons
3 tablespoon chopped garlic	2 tablespoons chopped parsley (from stems)
4 sprigs thyme	
2 bay leaves	

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 300° F degrees.

Dry the lamb shanks with paper towels and sprinkle them generously with salt and pepper. In a 5 inch deep Dutch oven (or other large oven proof pot with a lid). Heat oil over medium-high heat until very hot but not smoking. Add the shanks in single layer (in batches if necessary to avoid crowding) and cook until well browned on all sides; 10 to 15 minutes total. Transfer the shanks to a platter as they are done.

Pour off all but about 2 tablespoons of fat from the pot. Add the onions and cook, stirring occasionally, (until translucent, about 7 to 9 minutes). Add the carrots and celery and stir occasionally, for about 5 minutes. Add 2 T garlic, thyme, parsley stems and bay leaf and stir, for 1 minute or more.

Return the lamb to the pot and pour in the wine, vinegar, and stock. (The liquid should come about halfway up the sides of the shanks; if it does not, add more wine to the stock.) Bring to a simmer, stirring to incorporate any brown crusty stuff in the bottom of the pot. Skim any film from the surface.

Cover and place in the oven to cook until the lamb is very tender. (Around 1 ½ to 2 hours.) To check for doneness, plunge a fork straight down into the meat and try to pull the fork out. If the fork slides right out, the meat is done; if the meat hangs onto the fork, give it more time.

While the shanks are braising, make the Gremolata. Put chopped garlic, 2T chopped parsley and the lemon zest in a mortar and pestle and press until combined. Reserve for garnish.

When the shanks are done, transfer them to a platter and cover with foil to keep warm. Skim the fat from the braising liquid. Reduce the liquid by 1/2, or until it coats the back of a spoon. Strain the sauce into a clean pot, add the cooked shanks, cover, and keep warm. Serve on soft polenta or mashed potatoes with braising sauce and a sprinkle of Gremolata.