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Cooking with the Club

with Chef Robert Larios



LAMB STEW

Happy St. Patrick's Day to all! This month I offer lamb stew. There are a number of recipes for this stew, with several labeling themselves as traditional dishes. I wish not to verify their claims; instead I say that any lamb stew recipe can be traditional as traditions begin in our own kitchens.

I also wish to share a wonderful recipe from Terry Gray, who offers a spicy shrimp, spinach, and rice dish. Well done, Terry!

Lamb Stew

Makes 4 to 6 Servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 whole lamb shanks (other lamb cuts possible)
- Sea salt and pepper
- 1 whole onion
- 1/2 cup sliced leek
- 4 whole carrots
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup of flour
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 bunches fresh thyme
- 1 whole bay leaf
- 1 cup pearl barley
- 1/4 bunches thyme
- 1/2 bunches parsley
- 3 to 5 cups beef or vegetable broth
- 1 stick unsalted butter (optional)
- 6 whole Russet potatoes (substitution possible)

DIRECTIONS:



- 1 Wash and dice the whole onion, leek, carrots, celery, thyme, and parsley.
On a plate, place flour with salt and pepper – making seasoned flour. Dredge the lamb shanks on both sides with this flour mixture. Place a large pot (or Dutch oven) on the stove over medium heat with the olive oil. Place the seasoned lamb shanks in the pot and let cook until golden brown on each side.



- 2 Remove the lamb shanks from the pot and place on a separate plate. Quickly add the diced vegetables (onion, leek, carrots, celery, half of thyme and half of parsley). Stir the vegetables until they are browned, and add a half-cup of water and beef broth to deglaze the pot. Now add the lamb shanks. Lastly add the rest of the broth. Let stew come to a boil, and then reduce to a simmer on low heat. Let cook for about 1.5 to 2 hours. At about 1 hour into the simmering process, add the potatoes. At the end of the cooking process, add the leek and the rest of the parsley and thyme.

[A Cook's Dictionary]

Thyme:

There are several varieties of this mint-family member, a perennial herb native to southern Europe and the Mediterranean. Garden thyme, the most often used variety, is a bush with gray-green leaves giving off a pungent minty, light-lemon aroma. Sub-varieties include the narrow-leafed French thyme and broad-leafed English thyme.

Bibliography: © Barron's Educational Services, Inc. 1995, based on The Food Lover's Companion, second edition, by Sharon Tyler Herbst.



Fun Food Quote:

"Never eat more than you can lift."

– Miss Piggy

- 3 Serve and enjoy!

A Cooking With the Club Extra

Terry's Spicy Shrimp, Spinach, and Rice – Terry Gray, General Services

INGREDIENTS:

- Approximately 40 medium tiger shrimp
- Spinach
- Rice
- All-purpose flour
- Black pepper
- Cayenne pepper
- Onion powder
- Garlic powder
- Seasoned salt
- Avocado oil/olive oil



DIRECTIONS:

- 1 **Shrimp:** Shell and devein shrimp. Rinse in colander under cold water. Season lightly with spices, making sure every shrimp gets evenly seasoned. In a medium bowl, pour about 2 cups flour. Combine all seasonings to preferred taste in bowl and mix with a fork so as to get flour and seasoning mixed evenly. In large non-stick skillet, pour 2/3 full of avocado/olive oil. Turn on 3/4 high heat. Before placing shrimp in oil, make sure oil is hot by sprinkling a drop of water in oil (*just one drop!*). When it pops, the oil is hot enough. Toss shrimp in flour mixture, coating each shrimp evenly. Place shrimp in oil carefully for approximately 4 minutes. Do not crowd skillet. Take out and place on paper-towel-covered plate.
- 2 **Spinach:** Rinse spinach under cool water thoroughly and cut off stems. Coarsely chop spinach. Cover bottom of a skillet with avocado/olive oil. Raise to medium heat. Don't overcrowd skillet with spinach, as you will have to stir. Keep adding spinach as it cooks down in the skillet. Cook for approximately 3 minutes. Spinach will still be bright green. Add minced or fresh garlic (if it's fresh, chop finely), seasoned salt and cayenne pepper (not too much). Lightly sprinkle more oil, constantly stirring. Cook for about 3 minutes more.
- 3 **Plating:** Make a large circle on your plate with the spinach. Place cooked rice in center of spinach circle. Place about 7 or 8 shrimp on top of spinach. Enjoy!

