

Greek Lamb Stifado with Cauliflower & Fennel Bake

Good Thor, I love Greek food. Tender lamb chunks and whole baby onions, slowly cooked in cinnamon and red wine had the whole house smelling like a dream. It just so happened I had some fennel and cauliflower lying around the veggie crisper so a Greek inspired bake to go with the lamb seemed like an excellent option. It did not disappoint, what a combo! Lucky for you, you get two recipes for the price of one today. If you are time poor or don't want to use the cauliflower and fennel bake option, this dish would be gorgeous with rice, pasta or mashed potato. It is a winner though and it will be your loss, I have to say.

This could be done in your slow cooker on low for 6 hours or until the lamb is meltingly tender. Don't forget to brown the lamb and onions and reduce the stock to 1 cup.

Prep time: 30 Minutes
\$\$ Medium Budget

Cooking time: 3 Hours

Serves 6-8 (depending on the size of your eaters!)

Oil for frying

1.4kg boned lamb shoulder, cut into 3cm chunks

12 baby onions, tops removed and skin peeled (leave the bottom in tact so the onions stay together)

4 cloves of garlic, finely minced

1 tbs of dried oregano

2 sprigs of rosemary, leaves removed and finely chopped

3 bay leaves

2 cinnamon sticks

2 tbs of red wine vinegar

2 cups of good red wine

1 1/2 cups of chicken stock

2 x 400gm tins of diced tomatoes
3 tbs of tomato paste
1/3 cup of currants
Sea salt and cracked pepper
100gm of Fetta, crumbled
1 tbs of finely chopped parsley
1 tbs of finely chopped dill
Grated rind of 1/2 a lemon
Pita breads and steamed greens to serve

For the Cauliflower and Fennel Bake:

1/2 a head of cauliflower, florets separated
1 large fennel bulb, tops removed, halved and cut into wedges
2 cloves of garlic, minced
Grated rind of 1/2 a lemon
Juice of 1/2 a lemon
1 tbs of finely chopped parsley
1 tbs of finely chopped dill
250ml of pure cream
1/2 cup of finely grated parmesan
Sea salt and pepper

Heat a large heavy based pan and add a little oil. Fry the onions, tossing them around the pan until golden. Remove from the pan and then add the lamb, in batches until nice and brown and caramelised. Once all of the lamb is cooked, add it and the onions back to the pan with the garlic, rosemary, oregano, bay leaves and cinnamon sticks. Fry for a couple of minutes and then pour in the red wine vinegar and wine. Use a wooden spoon to scrape the bottom of the pan and allow the wine to reduce by half before adding the stock, tomatoes and tomato paste. Season with salt and pepper and stir well to combine before bringing the mixture to a simmer. Cover with a sheet of

baking paper and top with a tight fitting lid and allow to simmer for 2 hours, stirring occasionally. Add the currants to the lamb about 30 minutes before serving.

Preheat the oven to 160°C. While the lamb is cooking, place the cauliflower and fennel in a microwave safe bowl. Add a couple of tablespoons of water and microwave on high for 4-5 minutes or until the vegetables are just tender. Drain the water away and place them in a shallow baking dish.

Combine the garlic, lemon juice and rind, dill, parsley, cream and salt and pepper in a small bowl and pour over the top of the vegetables. Scatter over the parmesan cheese and bake in a low oven for approximately 50 minutes or until golden and cooked through.

To make the garnish for the lamb, crumble the feta into a small bowl and combine with the dill, parsley and lemon rind.

To serve, divide the cauliflower bake between serving bowls and spoon the Stifado along side, making sure everyone gets an equal portion of the deliciously sweet onions. Sprinkle the feta mixture over the top and serve with flatbreads and steamed greens if you so desire.