

## Lamb Shank & Barley Soup with Salsa Verde



There is nothing like a comforting lamb shank soup to make you feel all warm and cosy in the middle of winter. This recipe (or variations of) have been cooked in my family for four generations and the smell of it cooking just brings back so many memories for me. My Great Grandmothers, my Grandmothers and my Mothers kitchens all smelling of this simple, hearty soup. Food has come an awful long way since then and flavour has become of greater importance than just using the bare essentials to come up with a somewhat

healthy and filling meal. We have so many more ingredients available and because of progressive TV chefs, the Internet and the ability to import ingredients so easily we now know what can take a meal from being simple and comforting to an absolute flavour sensation with the addition of just a few ingredients. Adding the Salsa Verde to the soup gave it an acidity that cut through the richness of the lamb and totally transformed an already sensational soup into an exemplary one. By all means, stick to the sensational version if that is your preference but I can tell you the exemplary version is bang on.

**Prep time: 30 minutes Cooking time: 3 Hours \$ Low Budget**

**Serves 6-8**

Oil for frying

2-3 large lamb shanks

1 large brown onion, diced

2 bay leaves

3 sprigs of parsley

3 cloves of garlic, minced

1 fennel bulb, diced

2 carrots, peeled and diced

3 celery stalks, diced

1 large parsnip, peeled and diced

1 bag of chopped kale

1 cup of barley

2 litres of water

Sea salt and pepper

**For the Salsa Verde:**

2 cups of flat leaf parsley leaves

1 cup of mint leaves

1/4 cup of extra virgin olive oil

2 tbs of dijon mustard

1 tbs of capers

3 anchovy fillets

1 tbs of red wine vinegar

To make the soup, heat a large, heavy based pot and add a little oil. Season the lamb Shanks with Salt and pepper and fry them on all sides until golden brown and then remove and set aside.

To make the stock, cut the tops and bottoms off the onions, carrots, celery, fennel and parsnip. In the same pan you cooked the shanks, add a little more oil and add the vegetable tops and bottoms along with the garlic skins, parsley and bay leaves and fry for a few minutes to release the aromas. Place the shanks back in the pot and cover with two litres of water. Season generously with salt and pepper, bring to the boil and once boiling reduce the heat to low and simmer for approximately two hours or until the meat is falling off the bones.

Once the meat is ready, remove the shanks from the pot with a pair of tongs and then drain the stock through a fine sieve into a large bowl. Place the pot back on the heat and add a little oil. Fry the onion until just starting to soften and then fry the garlic, carrot, celery, fennel and parsnip for a few minutes before pouring the stock back into the pot. Place the cup of raw barley in the pot and allow the soup to come to the boil. Once boiling reduce to a simmer and place a lid on. Simmer for approximately 50-60 minutes or until the barley is tender. You can soak it overnight if you wish but I don't think it needs it.

Remove the meat from the shanks and discard the bones. Give the meat a rough chop before adding back to the soup. About 5 minutes before serving, add the kale to the soup and stir to combine. Have a taste and adjust seasoning to you taste.

To make the salsa verde, add all of the ingredients to a small food processor and blitz until you have a nice creamy paste.

To serve, divide the soup between serving bowls and top with a generous dollop of the salsa verde. Serve with crusty bread. The leftovers are absolutely sensational the next day.....

Leftover Salsa Verde? You may want to cook this.....

[Slow Braised Beef Cheeks with Salsa Verde and Creamy Mash](#)