

Middle Eastern Lamb & Lentil Pie with Minted Yoghurt & Orange & Radish Salad

This was one of those moments where I changed my mind at the last minute and came up with something wonderful. Now I know I shouldn't talk myself up quite as much as I do, but after sampling this fine fare, I can't help it!

Crunchy, buttery, filo pastry encasing a delectable spiced lamb filling touched with sweet raisins and balanced out with the perfect amount of pine nut crunch. Not satisfied, I then had to moisten it up a tad with a minted yoghurt and the perfect accompaniment..... a moroccan radish & orange salad.

Prep time: 30 Minutes

Cooking time: 60 Minutes

\$ Low Budget

Serves 6

Olive oil for frying

12 Sheets of filo pastry

100gm of butter, melted

500gm lamb mince

400gm tin of lentils, drained and rinsed

1 brown onion, finely diced

2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped

2 tsp of ground cumin

2 tsp of ground coriander

1 tsp of paprika

1/2 tsp of cinnamon

1/2 tsp of ground cloves

2 tbs of pomegranate molasses*

1 ripe tomato, finely chopped

1/2 cup of raisins

2 tbs of toasted pinenuts

2 tbs of roughly chopped flat leaf parsley

1 cup of greek yoghurt

2 tbs of finely chopped mint

1 tbs of lemon juice

Sea salt and cracked pepper

2 tsp of sumac*

For the salad:

1 bag of mixed salad leaves

1 orange, rind removed, quartered and sliced

4 radishes, finely sliced

1/2 a small red onion, finely sliced

2 tbs of extra virgin olive oil

2 tbs of red wine vinegar

Sea salt and cracked black pepper

Heat a large heavy based frypan and add a little olive oil. Lightly fry the onions until soft and then add the garlic. Fry for a minute or until fragrant before popping in the lamb mince. Increase the heat while the mince is browning and break the mince up with the back of a wooden spoon. When the mince is browned add the cumin, coriander, paprika, cinnamon and cloves.

Continue frying for approximately one minute to toast the spices before adding the tomato, lentils, raisins and pomegranate molasses. Make sure you keep the heat up to the pan as you want a fairly dry mixture. When all the juices have reduced add the parsley and pine nuts, season with salt and pepper and stir to combine. Remove from the heat and cover with a lid to keep warm.

Preheat the oven to 200°C

Brush a little melted butter in a medium sized baking dish. Lay out the filo pastry sheets on a bread board and lightly brush the top sheet with melted butter. Gently lift it into the baking dish and repeat with 5 more sheets of the pastry, brushing each one with melted butter. Don't be too precious about how it looks as this is a free form style of pie. Lay the sheets in different positions so that you don't have a big wad of pastry overhanging on one side.

Spoon the lamb mixture into the pie dish and then cover with the 6 remaining pastry sheets, spreading each one with a little butter. Fold all the edges in, nice and snug and brush the top liberally with butter before sprinkling on the sumac. Bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown and crispy on top.

Spoon the yoghurt, mint and lemon juice in a small bowl and season with salt

and pepper. Mix well to combine.

In a large salad bowl combine the salad leaves, orange slices, chopped radish and onion. Season with salt and pepper and drizzle over the olive oil and red wine vinegar. Toss the salad so that all the ingredients are coated with the dressing.

Remove the pie from the oven and cut into 6 equal portions. Gently scoop onto a plate with a spatula and dollop each one with a generous amount of the minted yoghurt. Serve with the salad on the side.

* Pomegranate molasses can be found in gourmet food shops and deli's. It has a very distinctive tart flavour. If you can't get it substitute with the juice of 1/2 a lemon and 2 tbs of balsamic vinegar. It won't be entirely the same but will still taste fabulous! Sumac is a middle eastern spice that can be found at the local supermarket.