

# Spiced Lamb with Preserved Lemon Salsa Verde

I am always looking for new, easy recipes for entertaining that can be largely made ahead, look super impressive on the plate and taste amazing. This Spiced Lamb with Preserved Lemon Salsa Verde ticked all of those boxes and more except that every time I have cooked this I got a little too excited on the bubbles and failed to get the winning photo for the website. Hence, I made it last night for Hubby and family, with zero wine on board and managed to get the shot. That is the beauty of this recipe, it can be made for the family using a cheaper cut of lamb like rump, curly tails chops or even low and slow lamb shoulder....or you can impress the guests with a rack of lamb or this beautifully tender, easy to cook back strap. While it is a more expensive cut of lamb, it will most certainly be a stand out, although I must say the thought of a slow cooked, spiced shoulder that just pulls apart and melts in your mouth sounds mighty fine. However you choose to cook it, I reckon it will become a firm favourite.

If you do decide to do a lamb shoulder, rub the lamb with the same marinade (maybe double the recipe for a large shoulder), place in a baking tray on thick lemon slices and cover tightly with foil. Bake in a 160°C oven for approximately 3-4 hours, removing the foil for the last 30 minutes to brown. The lamb is ready when it pulls apart easily with a couple of forks. For all of the other cuts, they are quick cook so the method will be largely the same as below.

This recipe can most certainly be adapted by changing up the sides too. In this instance, I chargrilled some asparagus and broccolini for a lighter option. You could however, serve it with Cous Cous, Quinoa or flat breads with salads or accompanying dips like Hommus or Baba Ganoush. It looks most impressive on a bed of Greek Yoghurt, served on a large platter and everyone can help themselves. Dare to be different and make sure to show me your versions on instagram by tagging me @emsfood

**Prep time: 20 Minutes**

**Cooking time: 10 Minutes (with a few minutes resting time)**

**\$\$-\$\$\$ Medium to High Budget (depending on cut of lamb used but way cheaper than eating out)**

**Serves 4**

**For the Spiced Lamb:**

4 x 200gm Lamb Backstraps

2 tbs of olive oil

1 tsp of ground cumin

1/2 tsp of ground coriander

1 tbs of runny honey

Juice of 1/2 a lemon

Sea salt and cracked pepper

Greek Yoghurt to serve

Toasted and chopped Pistachios to serve

Ground Sumac for sprinkling

**For the Preserved Lemon Salsa Verde:**

2 long green chillies, seeds removed from 1 or both if you like less heat

1 whole preserved lemon or 4 wedges, flesh removed and discarded

1 cup of flat leaf parsley leaves

1/2 a cup of mint leaves

Sea salt and pepper

1/4 cup of extra virgin olive oil

1 tbs of white wine vinegar

To make the Spiced Lamb with Preserved Lemon Salsa Verde, place the olive oil, cumin, coriander, honey, sea salt, pepper and lemon juice in a shallow baking dish. Run a spoon under boiling water and stir to combine. Heating the spoon will make the honey easier to blend into the marinade. Once combined, place the lamb back straps in the marinade and toss to coat so they are evenly covered. Set aside while you make the salsa verde. This can be done hours ahead too.

Place the parsley, mint, chillies, preserved lemon, olive oil, vinegar and a little salt and pepper in a small food processor and blitz until you have a fine paste. If it looks a little stiff, add a little more oil until it loosens up. If making ahead, place in a bowl, cover and refrigerate for later.

To cook the lamb, heat a large griddle pan or BBQ until nice and hot and sear the lamb for about 4-5 minutes either side for medium. Allow the lamb to rest before carving into nice even slices on the diagonal and across the grain for best presentation.

To assemble the dish or platter, place large dollops of Greek Yoghurt onto plates or a serving platter and use the back of the spoon to spread it out. As you can see from the image, I topped the yoghurt with chargrilled

asparagus and broccolini and then spread the sliced lamb over the top. Spoon over the Preserved Lemon Salsa Verde and scatter over crushed pistachios and sprinkle with sumac. Drizzle any pan juices on and around the lamb and serve with sides of your choice.

This tomato salad would go exceptionally well with a side of Cous Cous or Quinoa, pimped up with a little grated orange or lemon zest and a drizzle of chilli oil.

