



THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

A FOOD BLOG

Lamb Stew

The type of lamb to use is ill-defined, because a variety of lamb cuts might not be available and a number of different cuts will work. If you can find them, go for blade chops. I used a combination of loin chops and a sirloin steak, and it worked out very well. If the cut you use contains bones, use the higher amount of meat (around 3 pounds); otherwise, use around 2 pounds of meat.

I served this over mashed potatoes, which I really enjoyed. You can also replace the parsnips with potatoes if you want something a little more like traditional stew.

Serves 6

3 tablespoon vegetable oil
2-3 pounds lamb meat, fat trimmed and cut into 1-inch chunks, bones reserved (see note)
salt
3 onions, chopped course
1 (12-ounce) bottle of stout
2 cups water
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon dried thyme (or 2 sprigs fresh)
12 ounces carrots, halved lengthwise and sliced on a slight bias about ½ inch thick
12 ounces parsnips, halved lengthwise and sliced on a slight bias about ½ inch thick
¼ cup minced parsley

1. Adjust a rack to the lower-middle position and heat the oven to 325 degrees. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a 5-quart Dutch oven over medium to medium-high heat. Add half of the meat, with pieces spaced about one inch apart. Cook without stirring for 2-3 minutes, until the first side is dark brown. Turn each piece to another flat side and cook for another 2-3 minutes, until the second side is dark brown. Continue cooking and turning the pieces until all sides are dark brown, about 10 minutes. Remove the lamb from the pot and place it on a plate. Repeat with another tablespoon oil and the remaining lamb. (If you use a 7-quart Dutch oven instead of a 5-quart, you might be able to fit them all in one batch.)

2. Reduce the heat to medium. Add the last tablespoon of oil to the empty, unrinsed pot, then add the onions and a pinch of salt. Sauté the onions, scraping the browned bits from the bottom of the pot and stirring occasionally, for 8-10 minutes, until the onions are softened and browned around the edges.

3. Add the browned meat, lamb bones, beer, water, 1½ teaspoons salt, pepper, and thyme to the pot with the onions. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, then cover the pot and place it in the oven. Cook for one hour, uncovered.

4. Add the carrots and parsnips to the stew and cook for another hour, or until the meat is tender and the vegetables are softened. Remove the lamb bones, stir in the parsley, adjust the salt and pepper if necessary, and serve.