

Smoked shiraz braised lamb shanks with pea puree and sweet mash

Ingredients: 2 lamb shanks 1 cup of Shiraz (or another deep red wine) 1 cup of beef stock 1 sprig of thyme 1 sprig of rosemary 1 lemon BBQ Rub* 1 tbs smoked paprika 1 tsp onion powder 1 tsp garlic powder 1 tbs brown sugar ½ teaspoon salt ½ teaspoon cracked pepper *if you can get your hands on 'Butchers Axe' – 'Hunter' BBQ rub, use that!	Pea puree ½ kg frozen peas 80 grams butter 1 garlic clove crushed 4 shallots finely diced (or ½ onion) 1 cup of chicken or vegetable stock Juice of half a lemon Sweet mash 4 large white potatoes 1 small sweet potato 3 tbs butter ¼ cup sour cream Salt White pepper
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Method:

1. Lamb shanks shouldn't need trimming but if you feel compelled, trim some of the dags off but don't go silly with it, everything will render down. Mix together the dry ingredients to make a very basic BBQ rub. Spray the lamb shanks with a bit of cooking spray and coat liberally with the rub.
2. Fire up your BBQ or smoker to around 300f (150c) with an indirect cooking zone (so the BBQ acts as an oven without burning the meat). Add a chunk (or chips) of your favourite smoking wood. I use applewood when I smoke lamb. Place the coated lamb shanks in the indirect zone and close the lid.
3. If you can, grab your favourite drink and sit down and watch the smoke roll. Relaxation is an essential part of every cooking journey.
4. After an hour, check the lamb and if you have a spray bottle, spritz it with a bit of water or beef stock to keep it moist.
5. After two hours it's time to braise the lamb. Move the shanks into a BBQ proof dish or foil tray. Add the beef stock, wine, rosemary and thyme (that rhymes), and the lemon cut into wedges. Return to the BBQ for another 2 hours, checking at the 3-hour mark to ensure enough liquid is present (add more stock and wine if it's evaporating too quickly) and give the shanks a turn in the liquid.
6. The sweet mash is essentially 3 parts white potato to 1 part sweet potato, peeled and boiled until soft. Mashed with the butter, sour cream, salt and white pepper to taste.
7. I like to make the pea puree an hour before the shanks are ready. You'll see why shortly.... Place the peas into a pot with the stock, onion, garlic and lemon juice. Bring to the boil and then simmer for around 10 minutes until onions are soft. Drain the stock (but keep it) and use either a stick blender or small blender to puree it. Use small amounts of the reserved stock to add to obtain the right thickness. I like to have it around the thickness of ketchup or mayonnaise. Transfer the puree to a small BBQ proof dish (I use a small cast iron pie dish) and place it in the BBQ – this could be a good time to add some more wood chunks. The smoke will impart an amazing flavour into the pea puree.
8. The shanks are done when you probe them with a skewer and it feels like soft butter. Take them out, cover and rest while you prepare the other things.
9. When everything is ready, plate up! I usually pile the mash in the centre of a plate and stick the shank right in the middle and pour pea puree around the outside. If you want to get even fancier, you can drain and reduce the braising liquid into a jus' and pour over the shank. Enjoy!