

BRAISED LAMB SHANKS IN CLAY POT

(from The Bewitching Kitchen)

2 lamb shanks
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tsp oregano
2 shallots, thickly chopped
2 celery stalks, thickly chopped
1 can whole tomatoes with their liquid (28 oz)
3 large carrots, cut into large chunks
1/2c red wine
1 tablespoon tomato paste
2 bay leaves
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
salt and pepper to taste

Soak clay pot in cold water according to the recommendations for your brand.

Rinse and pat dry lamb shanks, season with salt and pepper. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a pan and brown the lamb shanks on both sides, about 4 minutes per side. Transfer to the clay pot.

Add the remaining tablespoon of olive oil to the pan, brown the shallots and celery until fragrant. Add tomatoes, oregano, tomato paste and wine, cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add cinnamon and balsamic vinegar, a little salt and pepper. Pour sauce over lamb shanks, add bay leaves. Arrange the carrots around the meat. If the liquid does not reach all the way up to the meat, add some water.

Place in a cold oven, turn to 375F and cook for 2 and a half to 3 hours. If after 2.5 hours the meat is not falling apart, and there is not enough liquid, add a little water, close the pot again and roast for another 30 minutes.

If serving next day, remove clay pot from the oven, cool it, and refrigerate overnight. Remove the congealed fat and warm the meat and sauce together.