



## French Lamb Stew

### Introduction:

Based on the French *Navarin of Lamb*, here is a recipe that will warm the cockles of the most jaded heart. We like to trim much of the fat off, but not all of it, it is the very thing that gives flavour and flavour is what this recipe is all about.

This is one of those dishes that once it's simmering, you can relax about it and just check once in a while.

And do take advantage of this 'big easy' by serving it simply, with the minimum of side dishes.

### Ingredients

30 ml olive oil  
1,6 kg lamb chops, some of the fat trimmed off  
45 ml cake flour  
50 g tomato paste (you can use more, if you want a stronger tomato flavour)  
3 (or more) garlic cloves, finely crushed (or to taste)  
750 ml prepared chicken stock  
250 ml dry white wine  
500 g carrots, cut into thick rings  
6 large thyme sprigs  
3 bay leaves  
300 g young green beans, topped and tailed  
250 g frozen green peas (optional)  
30 - 65 ml *roux* (See Chef's hint) or corn flour (optional)

### Method

Heat the oil in a large saucepan and brown the chops in batches, setting them aside until later.

To the rendered fat in the pan, add the flour, tomato paste and garlic and cook for a minute, stirring, then whisk in the stock and wine.

Return the lamb to the pan, add carrots, thyme and bay leaves and bring to the boil. Cover, reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for an hour or so until the meat is tender, but not falling off the bone.

Now add the beans and peas (if using) and increase the heat to bring to a boil. When boiling, reduce the heat and simmer for five more minutes or until the vegetables are cooked.

If you are left with too much cooking juices, thicken it with a *roux* (see chef's hint) or a paste made from corn flour and water or cook the stew on a high heat without a lid until the sauce has reduced and thickened to your liking.

Once you are happy with the meat's tenderness and the sauce's consistency, season to taste

before serving simply with a fresh, warm, crusty *baguette* (French loaf) and a simple green salad.

Serves 6 – 8.

**Chef's hint:**

A *roux* is a paste made from melted butter and flour. You can use equal quantities of each or a little more of the flour than butter like 30 ml butter and 45 ml flour. We usually make quite a lot and when it cools down and becomes firm, we roll 15 ml portion sizes of the mixture into balls, wrap them in cling film and store them in the fridge or freezer. They are excellent to pop into a saucy mixture that requires thickening.