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HOME-COOK FAVOURITES *with*

GUILLAUME BRAHIMI

BISTRO GUILLAUME

Mini Lamb Pithiviers

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Prep time 1 hr, cook 4 hrs
(plus chilling)

Makes 20

- 60 ml (¼ cup) olive oil
- 1 kg lamb shoulder, bone in
- 1 (200 gm) large carrot
- 1 (60 gm) stalk celery
- 4 (80 gm) French eschalots
- ½ head garlic, cut in half
- ½ bunch thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 litres butcher quality chicken stock
- 4 sheets (1.5 kg) Caramie puff pastry, defrosted overnight in refrigerator (see note)
- 2 egg yolks, whisked with 2 tsp water

Eschalot Dressing

- 35 gm French eschalots, roughly chopped
- 35 ml red wine vinegar
- 60 ml extra virgin olive oil

Lamb Jus

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 700 gm lamb osso buco
- 1 onion, roughly chopped
- 2 (300 gm) carrots, roughly chopped
- 2 (120 gm) sticks celery, roughly chopped
- ½ head garlic
- ½ bunch thyme
- 1 bay leaf

1 For lamb jus, preheat a saucepan over high heat and add olive oil and osso buco, fry for 3-4 minutes each side, or until golden brown. Reduce heat to medium, add onion, carrot, celery and garlic, stirring until lightly coloured and tender (6-8 minutes). Add herbs, stir to combine, pour in 1½ litres (6 cups) water to cover, bring to boil over high heat, reduce heat to low and simmer very gently for 4 hours until well flavoured. Strain into a clean saucepan, reduce until coating consistency over high heat, to about 180 ml (¾ cup), 15-20 minutes. Season to taste.

2 Meanwhile, preheat oven to 120°C. Place a heavy braising pot

(such as an enamelled cast iron casserole) on high heat, add half the olive oil (30 ml), fry lamb shoulder 3-4 minutes each side, or until browned. Meanwhile, roughly chop half each of the carrot, celery and eschalots into 2cm pieces. Reduce heat to medium. Add chopped vegetables with half the garlic, stir occasionally for 5-7 minutes or until lightly golden. Add herbs, stir, pour in chicken stock, cover tightly with a lid or foil and transfer to oven for 4 hours, or until lamb is fork tender. Set aside for 30-40 minutes or until warm, shred lamb finely. Strain vegetables and discard, cool and freeze stock for another use. Meanwhile, finely dice the remaining vegetables including garlic, heat remaining 30 ml olive oil in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add diced vegetables and stir occasionally until tender (6-8 minutes), set aside to cool.

3 For eschalot dressing, combine eschalots and red wine vinegar in a small blender, blend for 1 minute until fine. Whilst blending, slowly drizzle in oil until emulsified, set aside. Combine 2½ tbsp eschalot dressing, lamb jus, shredded lamb and diced vegetables. Form into twenty 20 gm balls (1 tbsp each), transfer to a tray, cover with cling film and chill until set (30-40 minutes).

4 Working with one sheet at a time, cut each sheet of puff pastry in half and roll each piece between lightly floured sheets of baking paper to about 25cm square. Cover and chill until firm (20-30 minutes). Using a fork, dock one square of pastry, lightly brush with water. Place 5 lamb balls on the docked pastry (one in from each corner and one in centre), leaving a 6cm gap between each ball. Place another piece of puff on top, press down and around sides of each lamb ball to seal tightly. Brush top pastry with egg wash, refrigerate uncovered. Repeat with remaining ingredients to make 20 pithivier. Chill in refrigerator until set (20-30 minutes). Cut out with a 7cm round cutter. Using the back of a pairing knife, gently mark each with curved radial lines from centre. Transfer to 2

baking paper lined trays, chill in refrigerator until egg wash has set (about 15 minutes).

5 Preheat oven to 180°C, bake pithiviers for for 20-25 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve warm with freshly ground pepper.

Note Caramie puff pastry is available from selected delicatessens.

MY NOTES