

## Jim Fairlie's Lamb Shank & Elderberry Wine Casserole



When you work with food and feel passionate about local produce you quickly learn that there are many more cuts of meat than what's on the menu at this week's fashionable restaurant. Take the shank; the leg of the animal has bone, meat and just a little bit of fat. This wonderful combination makes it a flavoursome cut with great texture and versatility.

In recent years the shank was relegated to the soup pot. Now don't be mistaken, a piping hot bowl of lamb broth is right up there with the best that Scotland's produce has to offer. Thick and warming, there aren't many soups to beat it. But the shank has much more to offer – as many of our older customers will testify to. During times of hardship, this inexpensive cut of meat was a staple part of people's diet. That said, many remember it not as a poor man's meal but as a moist, meaty casserole full of goodness and taste.

Jim Fairlie, the man responsible for launching Perth Farmers' Market, has been producing quality, Perthshire lamb for many years. In early 2008 he took over Logiealmond Lamb as the tenant farmer. Jim's lamb has been renowned for many years; he famously had Jacques Chirac eat his words following the G8 summit at Gleneagles when the then French Prime Minister had to admit that his assumption that Scottish Lamb wouldn't be as tasty as its French counterpart was completely unfounded and most definitely wrong!

Jim's Logiealmond Lamb is packed full of goodness and consistent quality. Brig stock a full range, butchering the whole animal to give a weekly choice including shanks, racks, chops, shoulder, gigot, kidney's and liver. Customers love the rich flavour and satisfying meatiness it brings to their table.

This dish is perfect for winter. I've tweaked and changed it over the many years I've been using Jim's lamb shanks and the addition of the elderberry wine and parsnips came quite recently. The sweetness of the root veg is a perfect balance to the lamb and the elderberry wine adds a wonderful, fruity depth to the gravy. And with a long, slow cooking time of 2 to 3 hours you'll have the remainder of the bottle to enjoy while it cooks.

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## Ingredients

### *Serves 2*

2 Meaty Lamb Shanks  
2 tablespoon summer harvest rapeseed oil  
1 small red onion  
2 medium carrots  
2 medium parsnips  
Sprig of thyme  
2 bay leaves  
½ litre of lamb or chicken stock  
250ml glass of Cairn O'Mohr Elderberry Wine (optional)  
3 – 4 large Maris Piper potatoes  
25gms butter  
25mls milk, warmed through  
Salt and Pepper to season

## Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C / Gas Mark 6.
2. Chop the veg into large chunks, coat in rapeseed oil, season and place in the oven for approx 20 mins
3. While the veg is roasting, heat a heavy based frying pan on high and seal the shanks for about two minutes on each side until browned all over.
4. Place the lamb, roast veg and herbs into a casserole dish and cover with the stock and red wine. Cover with foil or a tight lid and cook for 2.5 hours.
5. 40 minutes before the end, boil the potatoes in salted water until soft, drain and mash well with hot milk, and butter. Season to taste
6. Once cooked, place the lamb and veg onto plates remove the bay leaves and thyme and reduce the stock by 2/3 to make a gravy – you may wish to add a little cornflour to thicken.
7. Serve the mash with shanks and roast veg and top with the elderberry wine gravy.

To make this meal go further, pull the meat from the shank, stir into the gravy and roast vegetables and serve with broccoli and crusty bread. You should serve 4 as a mid week supper no problem.