

HONEY GLAZED LAMB with HERBES de PROVENCE

By Dennis W. Viau; modified from a recipe
found in *Food & Wine Magazine*.

I will try almost any recipe that involves lamb because I really love the flavor of the meat. I buy far more lamb than beef. The original recipe called for *a lot* of garlic. I chose instead to pair it with grilled and roasted vegetables.

Ingredients:

1 boneless leg of lamb, 3½ to 4½ pounds (1.5 to 2kg)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ cup (80ml/100g) honey, such as clover
3 tablespoons herbes de Provence
½ cup (120ml) dry red wine
¼ cup (60ml) Marsala

Directions:

Heat the oven to 400°F (200°C). If the boneless leg of lamb is tied or bound with elastic netting, remove it and open (butterfly) the leg to expose the inner meat. Spread about 2 tablespoons of the honey on the meat and season with salt and pepper. Then season the meat with about 1 tablespoon of the herbes de Provence. Roll and tie the leg with kitchen twine. Spread the outside with honey, season with salt and pepper, and coat with the remainder of the herbes de Provence. Place the meat, fat side up, in a roasting pan on a low rack in the oven. Add the ½ cup red wine and an equal amount of water to the pan.

Roast to the desired internal temperature (125°F/52°C for rare, 135°F/57°C for medium-rare, or 145°F/63°C for medium). Check the roasting pan occasionally. If the liquid appears to be boiling dry, add a little more water. Remove from the oven and transfer the meat to a carving board. Tent with foil and allow to rest 10 to 15 minutes. The internal temperature will rise another 10 to 15 degrees Fahrenheit (or equivalent Celsius) to finish the cooking.

Add the Marsala to the roasting pan. Heat over medium heat to loosen the fond (the brown bits) from the bottom of the pan. Strain the juice and skim off most of the fat. The liquid can be reduced in a skillet if the flavor is too mild. Use the juice as a garnish at the table.

For a side dish I peeled and sliced butternut squash, yams, and white potatoes, which I grilled about 6 minutes on each side on a stove-top grill/griddle lightly oiled with safflower oil (see Note at end). I then transferred the vegetables to a glass baking dish greased with clarified butter. The baking dish went on the lower rack of the oven to cook the vegetables with the lamb. I also put onion and eggplant slices on the grill, seared bar marks in them, and then reduced the heat below the grill to low to complete the cooking. The vegetables were arranged on a serving platter and garnished with extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper and a little herbes de Provence.

The **Step By Step** guide begins on the following page.



STEP-BY-STEP

1



Herbes de Provence is a mixture of herbs that is supposedly a blend commonly used in southern France.

2



Heat the oven to 400°F (200°C).

Remove any strings or elastic ties holding the meat together and open (butterfly) the meat. Trim away any large pieces of fat you might want to remove. Leave the rind of fat on the outside of the meat.

3

Spread about 2 tablespoons of the honey all over the inner surface of the meat. Season with salt and pepper, then sprinkle about 1 tablespoon of the herbes de Provence onto the meat.

4

Roll and tie the meat with kitchen string or twine.

5



Spread the remaining honey on the outer surface of the meat, season with salt and pepper, and add the remaining herbes de Provence.

6



Place the meat on a rack, fat side up, in a roasting pan. Pour the red wine into the bottom of the pan and add an equal amount of water. Roast to the desired internal temperature, measured with a meat thermometer. The easiest way to cook roasts accurately is to use a digital thermometer with a probe that is inserted into the meat before going into the oven. A wire connects the probe to the readout unit set outside the oven. Many of these thermometers can be set to sound an audible signal when the desired temperature is reached.

7



I like roasted vegetables with lamb. I peeled and sliced butternut squash (the upper portion above the seeds), white potato, and yam.

8



I lightly oiled my stove top griddle/grill with safflower oil (see Note at end) and heated it to about 500°F (260°C). I placed the vegetables on the grill and let them sear, without moving them, for 6 minutes before turning them over and searing the other side.



I greased a baking dish with clarified butter (see Note at end) and arranged the seared vegetables in the dish. I then brushed them with more butter and covered the dish with foil. The dish was placed on a lower rack in the oven with the lamb.

Additionally, I cooked onion slices and eggplant on the grill. There was no need to put these in the oven. I turned the heat under the grill to low and continued cooking these two vegetables until tender.

10



Arrange the cooked vegetables on a serving platter and garnish with extra virgin olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. I also added a few shakes of the herbes de Provence.

11



When the lamb is cooked to the desired internal temperature, transfer to a carving board and tent with foil. Let rest 10 to 15 minutes. The internal temperature will continue to rise a little as the heat from the outside portion of the meat migrates to the inside. Remove the strings before carving at the table.

12



This roast is a rich and flavorful cut of meat. The dark crusty outer surface results from the sugar in the honey caramelizing in the hot oven. Carve and garnish with a little of the juices recovered from the roasting pan.

Conclusion

This is one of the most exotic lamb roasts I've done. The herbes de Provence work well with the bold flavor of lamb, and the honey caramelizes on the outer surface of the lamb, giving the meat a rich glaze. Carve this roast at the table for the best visual effect.

Note

I find that few people understand the various smoke points of cooking oils and often they use the wrong oil when searing. Extra virgin olive oil can be used for cooking at relatively low temperatures, but it begins to burn at a temperature of 375°F (191°C). For searing at high temperatures, it is better to use a high temperature oil. Safflower oil has the highest smoke point among the common cooking oils, 510°F (266°C). I therefore use it on my stove top cast iron grill/griddle, which I heat to 500°F (260°C).

When roasting foods in a hot oven, it is likewise important to use an oil that won't burn. I roasted my lamb at 400°F (200°C), still too hot to use extra virgin olive oil in the roasting pan with the vegetables. Clarified butter has a smoke point of 485°F (252°C), safe for a hot oven. Note that whole butter, not clarified, burns at a temperature as low as 250°F (121°C) and should not be used for cooking or browning. Corn oil, 450°F (232°) is safer than canola oil, 400°F (204°C) for high temperature cooking.

I like to think of extra virgin olive oil as a flavoring oil. I cooked my vegetables using fats with a high smoke point, then I drizzled extra virgin olive oil over the vegetables before serving.