

Kleftiko - Κλέφτικο (kleftiko)



Slow-cooked lamb or goat, typically seasoned with garlic, lemon, and oregano, and traditionally cooked in a sealed pit oven.

SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	CUISINE
Serves 6	25 minutes	3 hours 15 minutes	3 hours 40 minutes	Greek

Ingredients

- 1.5 kg (3 lb 5 oz) lamb shoulder, cut into large chunks
- 4 garlic cloves, sliced
- 2 tbsp dried Greek oregano
- 2 tsp fine sea salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 lemons, 1 zested and both juiced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 kg (2 lb 4 oz) waxy potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 1 large onion, cut into wedges



- 150 ml (5 fl oz) dry white wine
- 100 ml (3½ fl oz) water
- 2 tbsp flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped

Method

1. Put the lamb into a large bowl and season with the garlic, oregano, salt, pepper, lemon zest, lemon juice and olive oil. Massage everything together well, then leave to marinate for at least 20 minutes, or up to 2 hours in the refrigerator.
2. Heat the oven to 160°C fan (180°C/350°F/Gas 4).
3. Arrange the potatoes and onion in a deep roasting tin or casserole. Tuck the bay leaves among them and season lightly with a little salt and pepper.
4. Set the marinated lamb on top of the vegetables, scraping in any remaining marinade. Pour over the wine and water.
5. Cover tightly with baking paper and then a double layer of foil, sealing the edges well so the steam stays inside. If using a lidded casserole, fit the lid securely.
6. Bake on the middle shelf for 2 hours 45 minutes at 160°C fan (180°C/350°F/Gas 4) until the lamb is very tender when pierced and the potatoes are soft but still holding their shape.
7. Remove the foil and paper, increase the oven to 200°C fan (220°C/425°F/Gas 7), and bake for 20 to 25 minutes more until the lamb is lightly browned and the juices have reduced slightly.
8. Lift the lamb and potatoes onto a warmed platter. Spoon over the pan juices, scatter with parsley and rest for 10 minutes before serving.
9. Taste the cooking juices and adjust the seasoning if needed before spooning them back over the meat. Serve hot, ensuring each portion gets both lamb and potatoes.

To serve

Serve Kleftiko straight from the roasting tin or arranged on a warmed platter with plenty of its juices, alongside a crisp green salad and warm bread to mop up the sauce. A chilled white wine or a dry rosé suits the rich, lemony lamb well.

