

Slow-roasted shoulder of lamb with harissa

You need to take your time over this slow-roasted shoulder of lamb that features in the new book by Michelin-starred

Raymond Blanc.

“When I was about 12 years old, I was introduced to the food of Algeria. It was during the Algerian War, and in France there were camps for Algerian refugees. One such camp was close to my village and I would go and visit these intriguing, kind and friendly people. They fed us well,” recalls the 71 year-old chef.

“I remember seeing whole lambs roasted on the spit and, as the meat was turned, it was also painted with the spicy juices.

“This dish does not require a whole lamb. When it comes to slow cooking lamb, the shoulder is the best cut, meltingly tender and incredibly tasty. When harissa is added, this is a wonderful dish, and the chickpeas will only complement it.

“A shoulder of lamb varies in weight, becoming heavier as the year progresses. A 2.5kg shoulder, like the one in this recipe, will take about four and a half hours; one weighing 3kg will need five and a half hours.

“Aim to remove it from the fridge four to five hours before cooking to come to room temperature.”



SLOW-ROASTED SHOULDER OF LAMB WITH HARISSA

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4-6)

1tbsp sea salt
1tbsp ground cumin
100g rose harissa
100ml extra-virgin olive oil
2.5kg new season's shoulder of lamb
300ml water
1 jar (230g) piquillo peppers
2 beldi preserved lemons
A large handful of curly or flat-leaf parsley
2 tins (400g) chickpeas
Sea salt and black pepper

METHOD

1 Mix together the salt, cumin and harissa, and then add the extra-virgin olive oil. Place the lamb in a roasting tin. Lightly score the skin of the lamb and rub it all over with the salty harissa mixture. At this point, you can leave the lamb for an hour, allowing the harissa flavours to infuse, but this is not essential.



return it to the oven for two hours, again loosely covered with foil.

4 While the lamb is roasting, chop the piquillo peppers, finely chop the preserved lemons (skin and pulp) and coarsely chop the parsley. Put them to one side; you will need them to finish the dish.

5 Remove the lamb from the oven. Spoon out most of the fat from the tin, leaving the roasting juices. To the warm roasting juices, add the chickpeas, peppers and lemon. Add the parsley too and season with the salt and pepper. Toss together and bring to the boil on the hob. Place the lamb shoulder on a platter with the chickpea salad.

6 Bring the lamb to the table and invite your guests to help themselves. The lamb will be tender enough to fall from the bone with a spoon, though it can be carved if you prefer.

• Simply Raymond: Recipes From Home by Raymond Blanc is published by Headline Home, priced £25

2 Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas 4.

3 Roast the lamb for 20 minutes, and then reduce the temperature to 150°C/130°C fan/gas 2. Cover the lamb shoulder loosely with foil, and return it to the oven to roast for a further two hours. Now baste the lamb, add the water and