

A hearty dish from Celebrity MasterChef champ John Partridge

This heart-warming dish from the new book by Celebrity MasterChef winner John Partridge is packed with flavour – and nostalgia.

“The first Lancashire hotpot I ever tasted was made by my sister Fiona. My big sister. My hero. My protector. My inspiration,” John recalled.

“When Fiona brought her first home economics offering back from school, I had high hopes. It was a Lancashire hotpot. She was amazing at everything else, so this was going to be of ‘Delia’ standards. ‘Fiona’s made tea tonight,’ Mum announced.

“Fiona proudly placed her hotpot down and I cried. ‘I can’t eat it. It’s got black bits.’ But I’m a Lancashire lad and hotpot is in my DNA. Fiona made many a hotpot after that. In fact, that’s all she made for the next five years.”

Ingredients (Serves 4)

50g unsalted butter, plus a little extra, melted, for brushing the top
450g onions, sliced
250g boneless lamb shoulder, diced
250g lamb neck fillet, diced
Plain flour, for dusting
20g golden caster sugar
5-6 floury potatoes (I use King Edwards) - you will need 850g once peeled
4 best end of neck lamb cutlets
Thyme leaves, for sprinkling
50ml lamb stock
Salt and white pepper
Pickled red cabbage

Method

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F), Gas Mark 4.

2 Melt 20g of the butter in a large pan, add your onions and sweat them down over a low heat for 15-20 minutes, until a very pale golden colour. Season with salt and a pinch of pepper. Set aside.

JOHN PARTRIDGE'S LANCASHIRE HOTPOT



3 Next, put all your diced lamb into a large mixing bowl, dust it with flour and season with the sugar and one teaspoon each of salt and pepper. Then get your hands in there and give it a good mix, making sure all the meat is coated with the flour and

seasonings. Set aside.

4 Peel your potatoes and then slice them thin, about 2-3mm thick. I use a mandoline for this, but you can also use a sharp knife. Put the potato slices into a bowl.

5 Melt 15g of the butter, pour over the potato slices and season with a teaspoon each of salt and pepper, then once again mix with your hands to make coat all the slices. Be careful not to break them.

6 Now you are ready to start layering. Use the remaining 15g of butter to grease a high-sided casserole dish and arrange a layer of potato slices over the base and up the sides - you are going to encase your lamb inside a layer of potato. Put your floured and sugar-seasoned meat into the base, add half your onions and mix together well. Then layer the rest of the onions on top.

7 Place the cutlets around the side of your dish, pushing the flesh into the onions, with the bones poking out of the top. Sprinkle thyme leaves on the onions before arranging the remaining slices on top, overlapping them.

8 Pour in the stock, brush the top with more melted butter. Add pepper and salt, and a sprinkling of thyme. Bake for about two-and-a-half hours. Brush with more butter halfway through.