

Middle Eastern Lamb Salad

I associate roast lamb with long Sunday lunches: lashings of mint sauce and mounds of roast potatoes. But with Easter falling late this year, a light salad feels more appropriate. Lamb is at its best during spring, so make the most out of it with these bright flavours, and bring a taste of the Middle East to your Lenten feast

Serves 4

- 2tsp hot smoked paprika
- 1tsp ground coriander
- Olive oil
- 500g lamb neck fillet
- ½tsp turmeric
- 1 large head of cauliflower, cut into small florets
- 2 aubergines
- 3tbsp tahini
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- Optional: 200g falafel

To garnish

- 80g fresh pomegranate seeds
- 15g mint leaves, sliced
- 15g coriander leaves, picked



Rachel Walker is a food writer for numerous national publications. Visit rachel-walker.co.uk for more information

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C
2. Mix together the hot smoked paprika and the ground coriander. Coat the lamb fillet in of olive oil and rub in roughly half the spice blend.
3. Add the turmeric into the remaining spice blend, and toss the cauliflower florets in the mix, along with 1tbsp of olive oil and a pinch of salt. Tip into one half of a roasting tin. Toss aubergine fingers in 2tbsp of olive oil, sprinkle with salt and tip into the other end of the roasting tin. Roast for 30 minutes, until the cauliflower is starting to char and the aubergine is softened.
4. Meanwhile, heat an ovenproof frying pan and sear the neck fillet for 2 minutes on each side until coloured all over. Pop it in the oven for 12 minutes, and then leave to rest for 10 minutes, before slicing.
5. Meanwhile, heat the falafel according to pack instructions and prepare the fresh herbs. Mix the tahini with the lemon juice and garlic—it will become thick and claggy—so thin it out by stirring in chilled water until it has the consistency of pouring cream.
6. Build the salad by roughly stacking the cauliflower, aubergine, falafel and lamb. Garnish with the fresh herbs and pomegranate seeds, and generously drizzle the dressing over the salad and round the edge.

Drinks Tip...

British lamb roasts are often accompanied by a big red, but pick something lighter for this lamb salad, like a Pinot Noir. Ostoros 2016 (£6.75, The Wine Society) has fruity cherry and redcurrant notes which work really well with the Middle Eastern flavours

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Lemon and Cardamom Bun Bake

Hot cross buns are a 12th-century treat which has stood the test of time. Like many medieval recipes they are packed with dried fruit—and spices are a natural pairing. Spike the custard with cardamom to harness Middle Eastern flavours and enjoy this decadent twist on bread and butter pudding.

Serves 6

- 3tbsp sugar
- 3 cardamom pods
- 150ml double cream
- 150ml milk
- 1 egg and 1 egg yolk
- 6 hot cross buns
- 120g lemon curd

1. Preheat the oven to 150°C.
2. Use the tip of a knife to carefully cut open the cardamom pods and flick out the black seeds. Grind them with the sugar in a pestle and mortar, into a fine, fragrant powder. Then,

mix the cardamom-scented sugar with the double cream, milk egg and the egg yolk.

3. Cut the hot cross buns in half, spread both sides generously with lemon curd and then sandwich

them back together. Fit the buns snugly in a buttered baking dish and then pour over the egg-milk custard. Bake for 35 minutes until the custard is set and serve with a scoop of ice cream or double cream. ■

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