

Gerard says,

"My Grandmother looked after me when I was growing up, and when I first started going to school, she used to walk me home and give me lunch, which was regularly Irish stew. Her Irish stew is legendary in the family, with my mum being brought up on it. Granny Leary always knew how to feed an army of hungry mouths, after granny passed away and through the years my mum has taken on the task of making this dish from time to time and now as a chef myself have added to granny's recipe, so I hope this version of the recipe does her justice!"

Happy St Patrick's Day to you all and keep it traditional keep it local keep it Irish!!!



Ingredients

- 2 tbsp. rapeseed oil
- 1 kg (2lb 3oz) lamb shoulder, trimmed and cut into 2.5cm (1in) chunks
- 2 onions, peeled and roughly chopped
- 3 celery stalks, trimmed and sliced
- 4 large carrots, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 large parsnips, peeled and roughly chopped
- 1 small head new seasons spring cabbage.
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 l (1¾ pints) beef or lamb stock
- 900 g (2lb) potatoes, peeled and cut into 1cm (½in) slices
- good knob of butter
- sea salt and ground black pepper
- slices of white bread, to serve

Method

1. Place a large, flameproof casserole pot over a high heat, add 1 tablespoon of the oil and brown the lamb pieces in two batches. Remove and set aside on a plate.
2. Reduce the heat to medium-high, add another tablespoon of oil and fry the onion, celery and carrot and parsnip for 4–6 minutes or until the onions have softened.
3. Preheat the oven to 160°C (325°F/Gas 3). Return the meat to the pot, along with the bay leaf and stock, season with sea salt and ground black pepper and bring to the boil.

4. Remove from the heat and push the slices of potato down into and across the top of the stew, dot with a little butter and give a final seasoning of sea salt and ground black pepper.
 5. Cover and place in the oven to cook for about 1½ hours or until the meat is tender, then remove the lid, stir in the chopped spring cabbage leaves and cook for a further 10 minutes until the potatoes have colored.
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6. You can serve the stew straight away or leave it covered overnight in the fridge for the flavors to develop. Serve in deep bowls with slices of white bread to soak up the liquid.

