

We don?t often get to eat Lamb these days, it?s a bit of a treat. But 1Kg of discounted minced Lamb at £2.10 was clearly an offer I couldn?t refuse?. This was a Tony ?Pot Wash? gig so before launching ahead, a word of warning?. This recipe made enough for 6 to 8 people and we now have a whole untouched casserole dish full in the freezer! It was a ?Hairy Bikers? recipe which we modified to keep in budget, not knowing it would make sooooo much. My mistake, but I?m good to put my hands up.

Ingredients:-

1Kg of Lamb mince
2 Onion, finely chopped
2 Garlic cloves, crushed
1 tsp dried Oregano
1½ tsp dried Mint
1 Bay leaf
½ a Cinnamon stick
1 tbsp plain (Gluten free in our case) Flour
A tin chopped Tomatoes
2 tbsp Tomato purée
2 Aubergines, cut into slices
Salt & Pepper
100ml of Oil
500g/1lb 2oz Maris Piper potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced

For the White Sauce:-

50g Margarine
50g Plain (Gluten free) flour
400ml Milk
50g Mature Cheddar Cheese, finely grated
1 tsp finely grated Nutmeg
2 Eggs, beaten

Method:-

(1) Put the Lamb, Onion, Garlic, Oregano, Mint, Bay and Cinnamon in a large frying pan and cook over a medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring to break up the meat.
(2) Stir in the Flour and a good pinch of Salt and Pepper. Add Tomatoes and Tomato purée and bring to a simmer. Cook for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the Lamb is tender and the sauce has thickened. Season again if needed and set aside.
(3) Meanwhile, place the Aubergine slices in a colander and sprinkle with the tablespoon of Salt. Set aside for 10 minutes.
(4) Rinse the aubergine slices under cold water and pat dry with kitchen paper. Heat 3 tablespoons of the oil in a frying pan and fry the aubergines for 2?3 minutes on each side, adding more oil when necessary. Remove from the pan and set aside to drain on kitchen paper.
(5) Cook the Potatoes in boiling water for 5 minutes, then drain in a colander under running water until cold.
(6) Preheat the oven to 200C
(7) To make the white sauce, melt the butter in a large saucepan and stir in the flour. Cook for a few seconds, then gradually stir in the milk. Add half the grated Cheese and the grated nutmeg. Simmer the sauce gently for 4?5 minutes, stirring regularly. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
(8) Remove the saucepan from the heat and allow the sauce to cool. When cooled, stir in the eggs.
(9) Spoon one-third of the Meat sauce into a shallow ovenproof dish large enough to hold 2.5 litres. Cover loosely with a third of the Potatoes and then a third of the Aubergines ? you don't need complete layers, just to arrange them roughly on top. Repeat the layers twice more, finishing with the Aubergines. Pour over the white sauce, making sure it covers everything in a thick, even layer. Sprinkle with the remaining Cheese. Bake for 35?45 minutes, or until deep golden-brown and bubbling.

OK this was quite a complex recipe for ?Pot Wash Man? to deal with and the preparation time is lengthy. But it was quite tasty. Personally I would have put more Mint and Oregano

in at the start. But we are into highly flavoured food on the cheap these days!