



now *that's*
a MOUTHFUL

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Bryant Ng of Cassia, Santa Monica

SPICY LAMB BREAST

Spicy and fiery, this is a boldly flavored lamb. Rice is your friend here, to temper the heat and soak up the sauce. And so is cold beer. I like to follow this dish with either the Kaffir Lime Pudding (not included) or the Meyer Lemon–Olive Oil Ice Cream (not included) to cool the palate.

RUB

1/2 cup cumin seeds, toasted
1/4 cup coriander seeds, toasted
1/2 cup Sichuan peppercorns, toasted
1/4 cup sesame seeds
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup garlic powder
3 tablespoons spicy chile powder (preferably Vietnamese)
2 tablespoons anchovy salt (preferably Red Boat)
2 tablespoons salt

LAMB

2 lamb breasts (about 2 1/2 pounds each)
2 tablespoons soy sauce
4 onions, cut into 1/2-inch slices
1/2 cup Sichuan chile oil or sambal oelek
2 tablespoons Shaoxing wine
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
1 tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce

WHITE SAUCE

1/4 cup water
1 tablespoon Chinese sesame paste or tahini
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
3/4 teaspoon pepper
salt
1 cup mayonnaise

TO SERVE

grilled onions (optional)
cooked jasmine rice
sambal oelek or Sichuan chile oil, to taste
lemon wedges
1 bunch cilantro

To make the rub, grind the toasted cumin, coriander seeds, and peppercorns in a coffee or spice grinder, then combine with the remaining ingredients.

To make the lamb, rub the soy sauce into the lamb breasts, then season liberally with half of the rub, patting it on to adhere. Reserve the remaining rub for the onions. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

The following day, remove the lamb from the fridge and bring to room temperature. Preheat the oven to 250°F. Sear the lamb in a lightly oiled skillet or on a grill to brown it.

In a bowl, toss the onions with the remaining lamb rub, the chile oil, Shaoxing wine, sesame oil, and low-sodium soy sauce. Place the onions in the bottom of a roasting pan. Place the lamb breasts on top of the onions. Cover the lamb with a sheet of aluminum foil, and then tightly cover with a second layer of foil. Cook for 2 1/2 or 3 hours, or until tender. Transfer the lamb to a platter or cutting board to rest. Drain the onions and set aside to cool.

To make the white sauce, whisk together the water, sesame paste, lemon juice, cardamom, pepper, and salt to taste in a bowl until the sesame paste is smooth and integrated, then fold in the mayonnaise.

Serve the lamb, carved, with the onions (if using), cooked white rice, a spoonful of sambal oelek, a squeeze of lemon, a shower of cilantro leaves, and the white sauce on the side.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Lamb breast is an inexpensive cut of meat that is served on the bone and is a little fattier than lamb chops. It yields beautifully to low-temperature roasting, but benefits from either an initial sear or a few minutes under a broiler before roasting. The lamb needs to cure in a dry rub overnight, so plan accordingly.

Serves 4 to 6

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