

2025 Hartford Fair
Lamb Cook-Off
Recipes



Smoked lamb shotgun shells

From the kitchen of: Cole Fox

INGREDIENTS

(2) 8 oz boxes manicotti shells	2 tsp Cajun seasoning
2 ½ lbs ground lamb	2 tsp black pepper
1 medium onion finely diced	1 tsp red pepper flakes
2 cups sharp cheddar cheese	⅓ cup barbecue sauce
6 oz cream cheese	(2) 16 oz packages of bacon
1 jalapeno finely diced	

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Preheat the smoker to 250 degrees.
- 2) Mix all ingredients in a large bowl, except bacon and extra BBQ sauce.
*The lamb meat and sausage are not cooked first.
- 3) Gently stuff uncooked manicotti shells from both ends, making sure there are no air pockets.
- 4) Wrap slices of bacon around each shell covering the ends of the shell. (You may need two pieces of bacon).
- 5) Brush additional BBQ sauce over both sides and place on a baking sheet while the remaining shells are being basted in BBQ sauce.
- 6) Smoke for 60 minutes, then flip shells over, add more BBQ sauce, and continue smoking for another 60 minutes or until the bacon is nice and crispy.
- 7) Remove from the smoker and enjoy.



Greek lamb bowl with lemon orzo & tzatziki sauce

From the kitchen of: Brooklyn Zink

INGREDIENTS

Tzatziki Sauce

½ cup cucumber grated
1 tsp salt
1 cup Greek yogurt (full fat)
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup fresh mint & dill leaves chopped
1Tbs lemon juice

Garnish

feta cheese, cube or crumbled
fresh dill
fresh mint
mini cucumbers, sliced
cherry tomatoes, halved
red onion diced

Orzo

8 oz Orzo
1Tbs extra virgin olive oil
1 lemon

Lamb

1Tbs extra virgin olive oil
½ medium onion diced
2 cloves garlic minced
1 lb ground lamb
2 tsp cumin
1 tsp dried oregano

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Bring a large pot of water to boil.
- 2) Make Tzatziki sauce.
- 3) Place cucumber in a strainer and salt it with 1tsp kosher salt. Let it drain for 20 minutes, then press out all the excess liquids with the back of a spoon. combine the cucumber with the yogurt, garlic, mint, dill, and lemon juice and refrigerate until ready to use.
- 4) Add orzo to the boiling water and cook for about 10 minutes, until al dente. Drain and drizzle with olive oil. Add lemon zest and season with salt and pepper.
- 5) While the orzo is cooking, heat 1Tbs of olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook until translucent, 2-3 minutes. Add garlic and cook for 30 seconds longer until fragrant.
- 6) Add lamb, cumin and oregano and season with a pinch of salt and pepper. Cook, breaking up with a spoon until fully cooked, about 8-10 minutes.
- 7) Serve over the orzo. Garnish with tzatziki, feta, fresh mint & dill, cucumbers, red onion and tomatoes, as desired. Enjoy!

Grilled Lamb Pizza with feta, arugula & honey

From the kitchen of: Mindy Allan

INGREDIENTS

Naan Bread from the store
2 Lbs ground lamb
salt and pepper to taste
1 Tbs minced garlic
fresh mozzarella
feta cheese
2 medium onion

2 ears sweet corn
3 Tbs salted butter
1 container of fresh arugula
olive oil for brushing the crust &
1 tsp to toss with arugula
honey to drizzle on top

DIRECTIONS

Prepare Toppings.

- 1) Melt butter in pan or dutch oven.
- 2) Slice onions thinly and add to butter. Add a pinch of salt and caramelize.
- 3) Remove the onions from the pan and save for later.
- 4) Cook two ears of sweet corn on grill, then cut off the cob, set aside.
- 5) Add enough arugula to lightly top your pizza to a bowl and toss with 1 tsp of olive oil, set aside.
- 6) Deglaze the pan with a bit of water and add the ground lamb and brown over medium heat. Add the minced garlic and salt and pepper to taste. Continue to cook until the lamb is evenly browned, drain. Refrigerate the ground lamb in a container.

Assembly.

- 1) Brush the Naan bread with olive oil.
- 2) Add the mozzarella, caramelized onion, ground lamb and sweet corn.

Cooking.

You can cook these however you like. They can be cooked on the grill, in a pizza oven, a traditional oven or in an air fryer. Cook the pizza until the cheese is melty and the crust is toasty. A wood fired pizza oven is the best method.

Remove the pizza from the oven and top with arugula and feta then drizzle with honey.

Shredded Lamb with Chicken Pilaf or Sweet Corn Polenta & Eggplant Sauce

From the kitchen of: Cheryl Lohrman

INGREDIENTS

Spice Mix

1.5 Tbs ground cumin
1.5 Tbs ground coriander
1.5 Tbs paprika
2 tbs ground cardamon
1 Tbs salt
Pinch of red pepper flakes

Slow Roasted Lamb

3 Tbs olive oil
2 Tbs honey
3 garlic cloves
3-4 lbs lamb shoulder
¾ cup water

To Serve

Olive Oil
Lemon Wedges
Fresh chopped cilantro
Yogurt

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Preheat oven to 300 degrees.
- 2) Mix together spice and set aside 1.5 Tbs for frying the lamb.
- 3) To the rest of the mix, add olive oil and minced garlic and rub all over the lamb.
- 4) Place lamb on a rack in a roasting pan. Add water to the bottom of the pan. Cover with a lid or double layer of foil.
- 5) Roast for 3.5 hours or until the meat can be easily pulled off the bones with a fork.
- 6) Remove from oven and let rest for 20 minutes. Then shred with two forks.
- 7) Skim excess fat off the juices and set pan juices aside.

To brown the shredded lamb

- 1) Toss the shredded lamb in the reserved spice mix.
- 2) Heat 1 Tbs canola oil in a heavy pan over high heat.
- 3) Without crowding the pan, add some lamb and drizzle about 3 Tbs pan juices over.
- 4) Cook until bottom is browned and crispy (1-1.5 minutes).
- 5) Continue until all lamb has been browned, adding more oil if necessary.

Serve the browned lamb over chickpea pilaf or sweet corn polenta/eggplant sauce. Drizzle with lemon juice, dollop yogurt on top, then sprinkle with some chopped cilantro.

Chickpea Pilaf

2 Tbs olive oil
1 small onion, finely diced
2 garlic cloves, minced
1.5 cups basmati or long grain rice
(2) 28 oz cans of chickpeas
(garbanzo beans)

2.5 cups water (I used vegetable broth)
2 tbs ground cumin
2 tbs ground coriander
2 tbs garam masala
1 tbs salt
black pepper to taste

Shredded Lamb with Chicken Pilaf or Sweet Corn Polenta & Eggplant Sauce (cont'd)

From the kitchen of: Cheryl Lohrman

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Heat olive oil in large sauce pan over medium heat.
- 2) Add onion and garlic; saute for 3 minutes.
- 3) Add rice and stir until rice is translucent and coated with oil.
- 4) Add remaining ingredients, cover with a lid and bring to a boil, then turn heat to low.
- 5) Cook for 12-15 minutes or until all liquid has been absorbed.
- 6) Remove from heat; keep lid on while allowing rice to rest for 10 minutes.
- 7) Fluff rice with a fork and serve.

Sweet Corn Polenta with Eggplant Sauce

Eggplant Sauce

1 medium eggplant, cut in $\frac{3}{4}$ pieces	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable oil
2 tbs tomato paste	1 cup fresh peeled, chopped tomato
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry white wine	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
1 Tbs fresh oregano, chopped	$\frac{1}{4}$ tbs sugar

- 1) Heat oil in a large sauce pan, fry eggplant over medium heat for 15 minutes, stirring to ensure it is nicely browned all over.
- 2) Drain any leftover oil (if any).
- 3) Add tomato paste, stir in with eggplant and cook for 2 minutes.
- 4) Add wine and cook for 1 minute.
- 5) Add remaining ingredients and cook for another 5 minutes.

Polenta

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs of fresh corn cut off cob	7 oz of feta cheese, crumbled
3 T butter	$\frac{1}{2}$ tbs salt
2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups of water	black pepper to taste

- 1) Place kernels in medium saucepan and barely cover with water.
- 2) Cook for 12 minutes on a low simmer.
- 3) Use slotted spoon to remove kernels out of water and into a food processor.
- 4) Reserve cooking water.
- 5) Process kernels quite a while to break up hills completely. If too dry, add a little reserved cooking liquid.
- 6) Return corn paste to saucepan, add a little more reserved cooking liquid and cook, stirring constantly; for 10-15 minutes, or until the consistency of mashed potatoes.
- 7) Add butter and feta; cook another 2 minutes.

Mediterranean Lamb Kebabs with Tzatziki

From the kitchen of: Jennifer Smith

INGREDIENTS

3 lbs ground lamb	2 cucumbers, grated and drained
3 Tbs canola oil, divided	2 cups Greek yogurt
3 cloves garlic, minced	2 Tbs Distilled White Vinegar
2 tsp dried oregano (or Greek seasoning)	2 cloves minced Garlic (or more)
2 tsp ground cumin	2 Tbs fresh dill, chopped
salt and black pepper to taste	salt and white pepper
	oil spray for griddle

DIRECTIONS

- 1) In a large bowl, combine ground lamb with 2 Tbs canola oil, garlic, oregano, cumin, salt and black pepper.
- 2) Mix thoroughly using your hands until well combined.
- 3) Divide the mixture into 10-12 equal portions.
- 4) Shape each portion around a skewer into an oblong sausage about 5 inches long.
- 5) Place on a tray and chill in the fridge for 20 minutes to help them firm up.
- 6) While the koftas chill, combine grated and drained cucumbers, Greek yogurt, white vinegar, olive oil, garlic, dill and a pinch of salt and pepper in a medium bowl.
- 7) Mix well and refrigerate until ready to serve.

Cooking

- 1) Heat the Blackstone griddle to medium-high heat and spray lightly with oil spray.
- 2) Brush koftas lightly with remaining canola oil.
- 3) Place on the griddle and cook for 8-10 minutes total, turning every 2-3 minutes until browned on all sides and coked through (160 degrees internal temperature).
- 4) Let rest briefly. Serve hot with chilled tzatziki on the side.



Smoked Leg of Lamb

From the kitchen of: Darrick Foster

INGREDIENTS

8-10 lbs Leg of lamb
8-9 whole garlic cloves

Marinade/Glaze Sauce

¼ cup Worcestershire sauce
¼ cup soy sauce
¼ cup brown sugar
4 Tbs dijon mustard
3 Tbs fresh lemon juice
3 Tbs date syrup
4 garlic cloves, finely minced
salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Sauce/Glaze Prep

- 1) Combine all the ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil, constantly stirring.
- 2) Once boiled, reduce the heat and simmer until the sauce thickens to cover the back of a wooden spoon.
- 3) Divide the sauce in half; use half for the marinade.
- 4) Place the other half into refrigerator to use as a serving sauce.

Meat Prep

- 1) Make 8-9 deep incisions into leg as far as you can.
- 2) Place 8-9 whole garlic cloves into incisions.
- 3) Use half of marinade to brush onto the leg.
- 4) Wrap leg into plastic and place in refrigerator overnight.
- 5) Remove leg from refrigerator 1 hour before smoking.

Smoking the Leg

- 1) Place leg on smoker and smoke at 225 for 4-5 hours, until leg reaches internal temperature of 135-145 for medium rare, typically cooked.
- 2) Let leg rest between 15-20 minutes before serving.

Smokey Lamb Meatloaf with tomato jam

From the kitchen of: Michael Lohrman

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs ground lamb	20 Ritz Crackers, crushed
1 med onion, diced	1 cup Ketchup
1 bell pepper, diced	2 Tbs Worchestshire sauce
3 eggs, beaten	1 cup tomato jam
2 tbs salt	1 tsp pepper

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Combine all ingredients except tomato jam.
- 2) Mix well and form into 2 one pound loaves.
- 3) Glaze with tomato jam.
- 4) Smoke with a drip tray at 225 degrees for 3-4 hours.
- 5) Let stand for 15 minutes.
- 6) Slice and enjoy!



Wood-Fired Lamb Barbacoa Tacos

From the kitchen of: Barry McDougal

INGREDIENTS

5 lbs boneless leg of lamb
1 cup red adobo sauce
3 tsp Kosher salt
1 dried avocado leaf, of
2 dried bay leaves
½ cup coffee
½ cup water, room temp

Red Adobo Sauce

1 ¼ cup boiling water
½ cup Ancho Chile powder
10 garlic cloves, skin on, toasted
3 tsp appl cider vinegar
1 tsp Mexican oregano
1 tsp cinnamon, Canela
½ tsp ground black pepper
⅛ tsp cumin, ground
½ tsp salt, more to taste

DIRECTIONS

Red Adobo Sauce

- 1) Heat up a skillet to medium heat, Add garlic cloves with the skins attached . Stir occasionally, toasting the outsides until they are soft. (should take about 5-7 minutes).
- 2) Boil the water. Add Chile powder to the blender, and pour the water over it. Allow it to steep while you prep the rest.
- 3) Peel the skins of the garlic once they have cooled, and add all the remaining ingredients into the blender.
- 4) Blend until fully incorporated, it should be a thick consistency.
- 5) Taste and adjust the salt.

Cooking

- 1) Set your smoker or indirect grill to 250 F.
- 2) Lay out the lamb. Take your knife and score the surface of the lamb slightly, just about ⅛" making a crosshatch. This is adding texture and allowing the salt & sauce to penetrate.
- 3) Salt the lamb on all sides, and then use the adobo sauce to cover all surfaces of the lamb.
- 4) Place in your smoker, spreading out the meat so it lays as flat as possible. Do not roll it up or bunch it together, you want as much smoke to penetrate as possible.
- 5) After about 2 hours it should be close to 165F internal temperature. Pull the lamb off and set it in a foil pan.
- 6) Add the leaves, coffee and water, making sure the liquids are not cold when you pour them in.
- 7) Seal up the foil pan with heavy duty foil and place back on the smoker.
- 8) Cook until the meat is about 195-210F and a thermometer probe should slide in with no resistance. If you feel there are tough spots, let it continue to cook, checking every few minutes.
- 9) Let the meat rest for 30 minutes before shredding.
- 10) Serve barbacoa tacos with pickled onions and salsa verde.

Korean Inspired Lamb Ribs

From the kitchen of: George Carter

INGREDIENTS

3 lbs lamb ribs

Marinade

2 Tbs brown sugar

2 Tbs honey

2 Tbs white rice vinegar

4 Tbs soy sauce

2 cloves garlic

1 Tbs chili powder

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- 2) Mix all ingredients together.
- 3) Glaze ribs and bake for 1 hour.
- 4) Enjoy

Stuffed Leg of Lamb

From the kitchen of: Breanna Hayden

INGREDIENTS

Marinade

½ cup red wine
½ cup olive oil
¼ cup lemon juice
2 Tbs minced garlic
1 Tbs rosemary
1 Tbs thyme
1 Tbs salt
½ Tbs pepper

Stuffing

2 diced shallots
2 Tbs minced garlic
10 oz minced white mushrooms
2 cups spinach, chopped
2 sprigs chopped rosemary
10 Oz chopped macadamia and pistachio

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Day before: pound leg to even thickness throughout.
- 2) Combine marinade ingredients with leg of lamb and marinate overnight.
- 3) To make stuffing, sauté diced shallots in oil and butter until translucent.
- 4) Add in minced garlic for 30 seconds then add in minced white mushrooms.
- 5) Cook until most moisture is gone.
- 6) Add in spinach and cook until wilted.
- 7) Add mixture to bowl and mix in the rosemary and chopped macadamia and pistachios.
- 8) Season to taste and wrap into logs and freeze overnight.
- 9) To bake the lamb, wrap the lamb around the stuffing logs and secure with twine.
- 10) Bake for 30 minutes at 450 degrees then reduce heat to 350 degrees and bake until the internal temperature reaches 140 degrees.

Ground Lamb Gyro

From the kitchen of: Judy Jagger

INGREDIENTS

Lamb filling

1 lb gyro seasoned ground lamb
olive oil

Toppings

Sliced red onion
Diced tomatoes
Shredded lettuce
Sliced cucumbers
Feta cheese
Kalamata olives
Pickled peppers
Fresh herbs

Sauce Options

Tzatziki
Hummus
Garlic sauce
Ranch dressing

Wrap Options

Tortilla wraps
Pita shells
Pita chips

DIRECTIONS

- 1) In a skillet, over medium high heat, cook the Gyro seasoned ground lamb until brown.
- 2) Drain excess fat.
- 3) Heat pita or tortilla shells until soft and pliable.
- 4) Spread your sauce of choice on the wrap. Add cook lamb and top with your favorite toppings.
- 5) Fold and enjoy!

** For an alternative bold style Gyro, skip the wrap and serve the lamb over pita chips, rice or lettuce.



Greek Lamb Stew with Orzo - Instant Pot Method

From the kitchen of: Emma McCombs

INGREDIENTS

1 Tbs olive oil or cooking spray	1 cinnamon stick
2 lbs lamb steaks, cubed	1 tsp salt
1 large onion or 6 shallots, chopped	1 tsp garlic granules
3 garlic cloves, sliced	1 tsp dried thyme or mixed Italian herbs
3 carrots peeled and cubed	1 ⅓ cup orzo
3 celery sticks, diced	3 cups vegetable stock
2 bay leaves	handful of parsley leaves, chopped
4 oz chopped tomatoes	3 ½ oz feta cheese, crumbled
3 Tbs tomato paste	ground pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

Instant Pot Method

- 1) Heat olive in instant pot using the sauté function.
- 2) Brown the meat in batches until nicely colored on all sides. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
- 3) Add a little more oil to the instant pot and sauté the onions, garlic, carrots and celery for 5 minutes. Season with salt, garlic granules and thyme.
- 4) Return the browned meat to the instant pot together with 1 cup of stock, tomatoes, tomato paste, cinnamon and bay leaves.
- 5) Set vent to sealing and cook for 17 minutes on high pressure. Release the steam manually.
- 6) Add the orzo and remaining stock and cook for 3 minutes on high pressure. Release the steam manually.
- 7) Give the stew a good stir. It will still have quite a lot of liquid.
- 8) Turn off the instant pot and cover loosely with the lid, without sealing.
- 9) Leave for 10-15 minutes.
- 10) Check again and stew should have thickened as the orzo will have absorbed more of the liquid and will be ready to serve.
- 11) Remove the cinnamon stick and bay leaves. Taste and adjust seasonings, if needed.
- 12) Transfer to a platter, season with pepper and sprinkle with feta cheese and chopped parsley. Serve immediately.

Greek Lamb Stew with Orzo - Stove / Oven Method

From the kitchen of: Emma McCombs

INGREDIENTS

1 Tbs olive oil or cooking spray	1 cinnamon stick
2 lbs lamb steaks, cubed	1 tsp salt
1 large onion or 6 shallots, chopped	1 tsp garlic granules
3 garlic cloves, sliced	1 tsp dried thyme or mixed Italian herbs
3 carrots peeled and cubed	1 ⅓ cup orzo
3 celery sticks, diced	4 cups vegetable stock
2 bay leaves	handful of parsley leaves, chopped
4 oz chopped tomatoes	3 ½ oz feta cheese, crumbled
3 Tbs tomato paste	ground pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

Stove / Oven Method

- 1) Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Heat olive in large Dutch oven.
- 2) Brown the meat in batches for 5 minutes until nicely colored on all sides. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
- 3) Add a little more oil to the Dutch oven and sauté the onions, garlic, carrots and celery for 5 minutes. Season with salt, garlic granules and thyme.
- 4) Return the browned meat together with all of the stock, tomatoes, tomato paste, cinnamon and bay leaves.
- 5) Bring to a simmer and cover.
- 6) Transfer to the oven and cook for 1 ½ hours, until the meat is very tender.
- 7) Add the orzo and cook for another 30 minutes or until the orzo is cooked through.
- 8) Remove the cinnamon stick and bay leaves. Taste and adjust seasonings, if needed.
- 9) Transfer to a platter, season with pepper and sprinkle with feta cheese and chopped parsley. Serve immediately.