



## RECIPE OF THE WEEK: 24/04/2022

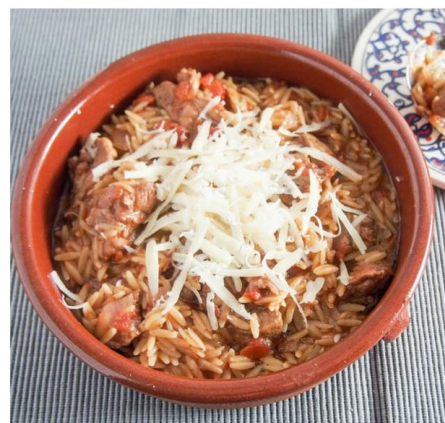
### Yiouvetsi (Roast Lamb with Pasta)

Serves 4

Yiouvetsi is a classic traditional Greek dish and is a speciality of several Athenian tavernas, as well as home cooks, especially on the islands. The dish takes its name from the dark red round tarracota dish which it is used to bake in. Some Athenian tavernas serve yiouvetsi in small individual earthenware dishes, bringing it to the table straight from the oven. Yiouvetsi is flavoursome and satisfying, especially in the cold winter months. The combination of the meat; lamb, veal, beef, or goat with the addition of spices, pasta, tomatoes and stock, makes it a really special dish. Pasta such as the Italian orzo, which in Greek is called minestra or kritharaki, is a tear-shaped pasta used in yiouvetsi. This is a uniquely classic Greek dish which when baked in a tarracota pot or casserole dish, can be turned out on to a large platter.

#### Ingredients

6 tbsp olive oil  
1Kg leg or shoulder of lamb, boned, trimmed of fat and cut into large serving portions, 8x3 cm  
1 small onion, finely chopped  
2 carrots, finely chopped  
2 leeks, the white parts only, washed and finely chopped  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
1x400g canned tomatoes or 450g ripe tomatoes, deskinning, deseeded and finely chopped or 400ml passata  
1 tbsp tomato puree  
a pinch of sugar  
2 bay leaves  
¼ tsp ground cinnamon  
¼ tsp ground cloves  
1 tbsp dried oregano  
125ml dry red wine  
1.5 litres hot water or hot vegetable or meat or chicken stock  
500g kritharaki  
50g kefalotyri or hard myzithra, kasseri or parmesan, grated  
sea salt and freshly ground pepper



#### Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 190°C/170°C fan/gas 5
2. Place the lamb in a large casserole. On a high heat, heat two tablespoons of olive oil and sauté the lamb pieces in batches for 4-5 minutes, until golden all over. Do not put all the pieces together because they will boil instead of being properly sautéed. Take them out of the casserole with a slotted spoon and set aside.
3. In the same casserole, add two tablespoons of olive oil and over a high heat sauté the onions, carrots and leeks for five minutes until they are soft and caramelised. Add the garlic and sauté for a further minute.

4. Place the meat pieces back in the casserole with the vegetables. Add the tomatoes or passata, if using, tomato puree, a pinch of sugar, bay leaves, cinnamon, cloves, oregano and salt and pepper.
5. Add the wine and let the alcohol evaporate. When it boils, pour 500ml stock in the casserole. Turn the heat down and let it simmer for twenty minutes, stirring occasionally until the meat is tender and the sauce thickens.
6. In a small casserole, heat two tablespoons olive oil and sauté the kritharaki until it has a golden colour.
7. Add another 1 litre of water or stock to the large casserole and let it boil. Transfer the kritharaki into the large casserole and boil for 5-6 minutes until it starts to soften, adding a little more water or stock if needed. Transfer the yiouvetsi into a tray or a clay pot, covered with a lid.
8. Turn the heat of the oven down to 180°C/160°C fan/gas 4.
9. Gently stir the yiouvetsi with a wooden spoon and ensure the topping is the same level all over. The liquid should cover all the kritharaki otherwise add a little bit more.
10. Bake the yiouvetsi for approximately 40-45 minutes until the meat softens completely and the kritharaki absorbs almost all the liquid. If needed, at a little bit more hot water or stock until the pasta is cooked but not for too long which would result in a mushy consistency.
11. Remove the yiouvetsi from the oven and serve with the grated cheese of your choice on top.

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