

Slow AND Steady

Macca is enamoured with a square kitchen gadget that not only cooks your bacon and eggs, but also a hearty lamb shank...

LAMB SHANKS IN CHAR SUI SAUCE

- 4 lamb shanks
- 1T plain flour
- 1T oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2-3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2T ginger, minced
- 1 small red chilli
- 600ml chicken stock
- ½ cup char sui sauce
- ¼ cup hoi sin sauce
- 1T soy sauce

Method

Coat shanks in flour then brown on the stovetop in the oil. When golden brown, remove and set aside. Add onion, garlic, ginger and chilli to the pan and sauté until light golden brown. Add the stock and the three sauces, mix well. Combine shanks and pan mixture in slow cooker. Spoon sauce over the lamb. Put the lid on and set to low, cook for four to six hours or until lamb is very tender. Serve some mash or rice on a plate and cover with a layer of fresh baby spinach leaves, add sauce from the pan (to wilt the spinach) and then place your shank on top.



Recently, we bought a slow cooker — one with a removable aluminium dish that can be used on the stovetop as well. This means that it meets my camp kitchen requirement that everything you take must have two uses. Once upon a time slow cookers had crockery pots that were useless on the stove, but not anymore. So this single gadget works as a frying pan, a boiler, a stock pot and a slow cooker — you would be silly not to consider carrying one.

And the unit is square to boot. It will fit into one of those many nooks and crannies that abound in our camper trailers.

Some friends of mine recently bought a brand new camper trailer and they are planning their first trip into Victoria's high country as a test run to iron out the bugs, in preparation for a longer trip later in the year.

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They have a couple of kids and plan to have regular breaks in caravan parks. Putting down roots in a caravan park every now and then is a great way to wind down from the bush camp routine; there are showers and toilets readily available, a camp kitchen that someone else cleans, power for lights and battery charging, and of course a playground for the kids to immerse themselves in.

And having a square slow cooker on board and caravan park power gives you the perfect opportunity to make an absolutely scrumptious and absurdly easy meal; it's all about setting, and forgetting. Relax, wash the clothes in the camp laundry, flick through the brochures at reception, watch over the kids in the pool, let dad do the things he needs to do at the mechanics — all the time knowing that dinner is on the go. ■

SIMPLE VEGETABLE & LENTIL SOUP

- 1T oil
- 2 large onions, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 large smoked hock
- 4 sticks celery, finely chopped
- 4 carrots, diced
- 1 sweet potato, peeled and diced
- 2L vegetable stock
- 2 cups dry red lentils, rinsed
- Salt and pepper
- Fresh chopped parsley to serve

Method

Sauté the garlic and onions in the oil on the stovetop until they are light golden brown. Add hock, celery and carrots and cook for another five minutes, stir occasionally.

Place in slow cooker and add the remaining ingredients (except the parsley), mix well. Cover with lid and set cooker to auto or high. Cook for four to five hours or until the lentils are soft. Remove hock, harvest the meat from the rind and bones and chop roughly. Return meat to the soup. Serve with chopped parsley, and crusty bread.



CORNERED BEEF

- 2-3kg piece corned beef
- Water to cover beef
- 2 medium onions, quartered
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1T black peppercorns
- 3 bay leaves
- Fresh sprig of parsley
- Fresh sprig of thyme
- Fresh sprig of sage
- Fresh sprig of rosemary

Method

Add all of the ingredients to the slow cooker, making sure the water almost or completely covers the beef.

Put the lid on and set the slow cooker to low. Cook for seven to eight hours, until the beef is tender.

If you wish to eat the beef in a meal with vegetables, add these to the cooker around one hour before the beef will be ready.

Allow the beef to rest for five to 10 minutes before slicing, to seal in the juices. Serve with vegetables and your favourite sauce.

