

American Lamb—Adding Flavor To Fall Weekday Dinners

(NAPSA)—Fall brings a crispness to the air, color to the trees and a change in appetites. Diners during the week call for comfort foods that are warm and filling, but require little time in the kitchen for the busy cook. With its versatility and delicate flavor, fresh American lamb is a wonderful option for weekday dinners ranging from hearty stews to light yet sustaining pasta dishes. These dishes will become family favorites that are also special enough to serve to friends for impromptu entertaining.

Step Away From the Stove with Stews and Casseroles

American lamb's mild flavor allows it to be paired with a wide variety of spices and sauces to create delicious stews and casseroles. These weekday meals for the family practically cook themselves, requiring little attention, and when potatoes or beans are added, they become a complete, one-dish meal.

The best choice for casseroles and stews is lamb steaks or meat from the shoulder or leg. Trim the lamb of any excess fat and then cut into ½ inch cubes. Brown the meat in a deep skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high heat with olive oil. Once all sides are browned, stir in garlic, onion and herbs or spices, cooking for another five minutes. From here, different ingredients can be added to create a variety of dishes that range from simple to more exotic; simply add liquid, for example, stock, wine or tomato sauce, lower heat, cover and simmer for approximately 45 minutes or until lamb is tender.



seasonings. Try adding herbs such as thyme, oregano or rosemary, or spices such as cumin and coriander. The recipe for Lamb and Bell Pepper Stew combines thyme, beef broth and tomato sauce for a hearty dish that pairs well with fluffy rice or creamy mashed potatoes for a warming dish the whole family will love. Or try adding dill, chicken broth, tomatoes and white beans for a complete meal that is reminiscent of the classic French dish Cassoulet. While the stew is cooking, the cook is free to relax. The succulent flavors of stews and casseroles made with American lamb also intensify if the dish is left in the refrigerator for a day or two, so you can prepare dinner ahead of time for an even faster weekday meal.

Sensational Skillet Suppers

Slow cooking lamb stews and casseroles are not the only option for weekday suppers. Build a delicious dinner around American lamb chops. It's an easy way to cook without spending much time in the kitchen. Simply season

lamb chops with salt and pepper before cooking them, in a skillet that has been coated with oil or butter, over medium-high heat.

From here the chops can be prepared by adding classic lamb pairings of rosemary and garlic. Or, once the chops have been browned, remove them and add maple syrup, vinegar and mustard to the seasoned pan. Once the sauce is hot, return the chops to the pan to coat with the glaze. This sweet and sour sensation is sure to become a family favorite.

For another flavorful weekday dinner prepared in a skillet, take 3-inch strips of American lamb steaks (leg, shoulder or arm) and toss them with Cajun seasoning. Cook over medium high heat with onion and green pepper. Add some canned crushed tomatoes for a Cajun Lamb Skillet that you can serve over rice.

Delicious Ground Lamb—no Hamburger Helper Required!

American ground lamb has a wonderful full flavor and can be substituted in any recipe that calls for ground beef, creating a variety of easily prepared dinners to enjoy throughout the week. Use to make tasty burgers, meatballs and meatloaves. Ground American lamb also works well in pasta dishes, for example, you can serve up an elegant but simple pasta entrée of Lamb Pasta with Basil Pesto.

For more information on delicious fresh American lamb, or for more recipe ideas, please call the American Lamb Information Center's Hotline at 877-747-4566 or log onto lambchef.com.