

## Christmas Braised Lamb Shanks: Tender & Flavorful Herb Infusion

Christmas Braised Lamb Shanks with Herb Infusion: A Tender, Flavorful Holiday Masterpiece!



**OVEN**  
**325°F**

**TIME**  
**5-7 min**

**METHOD**  
**Slow cooker**

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### INGREDIENTS

4 lamb shanks (typically about 1-1.5 lbs each)

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 onions, finely chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 carrot, diced

2 celery stalks, diced

1 cup beef broth (additional for sauce if needed -

Note: The recipe lists 1 cup for deglazing and 2 cups later. I will clarify this as 3 total cups needed for consistency.)

2 cups beef broth (for braising liquid)

1 can (14 oz) diced tomatoes (undrained)

2 tablespoons tomato paste

1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves (chopped)

1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, chopped

Salt and pepper to taste

Swaps and Notes:

**Lamb Shanks:** Choose meaty lamb shanks. They are ideal for braising due to their bone-in structure and connective tissue, which breaks down into gelatin, enriching the sauce.

**Beef Broth:** Low-sodium beef broth is preferred to control saltiness. You can use homemade beef stock for richer flavor.

**Vegetables:** The "mirepoix" (onion, carrot, celery) forms the aromatic base of the gravy. Dicing them small allows them to break down and contribute to

the sauce's body.

**Tomato Paste:** Essential for adding umami depth and a subtle richness to the gravy. Don't skip browning it slightly.

**Fresh Herbs:** Fresh thyme and rosemary infuse the lamb and sauce with a beautiful, earthy, and festive aroma. Dried herbs can be substituted, but use about 1/3 the amount.

**Red Wine (Optional):** While not listed in this specific recipe, a cup of dry red wine (like Cabernet Sauvignon or Pinot Noir) added after sautéing vegetables and before the broth is a classic addition for deeper flavor in braised dishes.

**Seasoning:** Be generous with salt and pepper on the lamb shanks before browning to build the foundational flavor.

**Directions:**

**Preheat the Oven:** Preheat your oven to 325°F (163°C). This low and slow temperature is ideal for braising.

**Season & Brown Lamb Shanks:** Season the lamb shanks generously on all sides with salt and pepper. In a large oven-proof pot or Dutch oven (with a tight-fitting lid), heat the olive oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Carefully add the seasoned lamb shanks and brown them on all sides, working in batches if necessary to avoid overcrowding. Sear until a deep golden-brown crust forms. This step is crucial for developing rich flavor. Remove the shanks and set aside on a plate.

**Sauté Aromatics:** In the same pot (don't clean it! Those browned bits on the bottom are called "fond" and are packed with flavor), add the chopped onions, minced garlic, diced carrot, and diced celery. Sauté until softened, about 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally.

**Deglaze & Add Tomato Paste:** Pour 1 cup of beef broth into the pot. Deglaze the pot by scraping up any browned bits from the bottom with a wooden spoon or spatula. Let it simmer briefly to reduce slightly. Then, stir in the tomato paste and cook for another 1-2 minutes, stirring, to allow it to deepen in color and flavor.

**Add Remaining Liquids & Herbs:** Stir in the remaining 2 cups of beef broth (for a total of 3 cups broth), the can of diced tomatoes (undrained), fresh thyme leaves, and chopped fresh rosemary. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer.

**Return Lamb & Braise:** Return the browned lamb shanks to the pot, nestling them into the liquid. Ensure they are mostly submerged (add a splash more beef broth if needed). Cover the pot tightly with its lid.

**Bake to Tenderness:** Transfer the covered pot to the preheated oven. Braise in the oven for 2 to 2.5

hours, or until the meat is incredibly tender and easily falls off the bone when prodded with a fork. Cooking time can vary depending on the size of your shanks.

**Adjust Seasoning & Serve:** Carefully remove the pot from the oven. Adjust seasoning with additional salt and pepper to taste. Ladle the tender lamb shanks with plenty of the rich, aromatic gravy. Garnish with fresh parsley if desired. Serve hot.

**Tips for Success:**

**Generous Seasoning & Browning:** Don't be shy with salt and pepper on the lamb shanks before browning. A good, deep sear is crucial for flavor development.

**Low & Slow Braising:** Patience is key! The long, gentle cooking time in the oven breaks down tough connective tissue, making the lamb unbelievably tender.

**Tight-Fitting Lid:** A tight-fitting lid keeps the moisture in the pot, creating a steamy environment that tenderizes the lamb.

**Deglaze for Flavor:** Scraping up the "fond" (browned bits) from the bottom of the pot after searing adds immense depth to your gravy.

## DIRECTIONS

- 1. Making :** Christmas Braised Lamb Shanks is a patient process, but the active cooking is minimal, allowing the oven to do the magic!
- 2. Preheat the : Oven:** Preheat your oven to 325°F (163°C). This low and slow temperature is ideal for braising.
- 3. Season & : Brown Lamb Shanks:** Season the lamb shanks generously on all sides with salt and pepper. In a large oven-proof pot or Dutch oven (with a tight-fitting lid), heat the olive oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Carefully add the seasoned lamb shanks and brown them on all sides, working in batches if necessary to avoid overcrowding. Sear until a deep golden-brown crust forms. This step is crucial for developing rich flavor. Remove the shanks and set aside on a plate.
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leaves, and chopped fresh rosemary. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer.

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10. **Tips for Success: Generous Seasoning & Browning:** Don't be shy with salt and pepper on the lamb shanks before browning. A good, deep sear is crucial for flavor development.
11. **Low & : Slow Braising:** Patience is key! The long, gentle cooking time in the oven breaks down tough connective tissue, making the lamb unbelievably tender.
12. **Tight-: Fitting Lid:** A tight-fitting lid keeps the moisture in the pot, creating a steamy environment that tenderizes the lamb.
13. **Deglaze for : Flavor:** Scraping up the "fond" (browned bits) from the bottom of the pot after searing adds immense depth to your gravy.
14. **Rest (Optional but Recommended):** While you can serve immediately, letting the lamb rest off the heat for 5-10 minutes after removing from the oven can help the juices redistribute, making it even juicier.
15. **Skim : Fat (Optional):** If there's excess fat floating on top of the gravy after braising, you can skim it off before serving for a cleaner sauce.
16. **Serving Suggestions and Pairings:** These Christmas Braised Lamb Shanks are a true holiday centerpiece. They pair beautifully with classic comforting sides that can soak up all that delicious gravy:
17. Creamy mashed potatoes
18. Garlic mashed potatoes (like from my Garlic Butter Steak and Potatoes recipe)
19. Polenta or soft polenta
20. Roasted root vegetables (carrots, parsnips, potatoes)
21. Steamed green beans or asparagus
22. Crusty bread for dipping
23. For other fantastic comforting beef dishes, you might also enjoy my Classic, Hearty Beef Stew or my tender Braised Oxtails.
24. **Storage and Leftover Tips:** Braised Lamb Shanks often taste even better the next day as the flavors continue to meld! Store leftovers (meat and gravy) in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3-4 days. To reheat, gently warm in a pot on the stovetop over low heat, adding a splash of beef broth or water if the gravy has thickened too much. You can also microwave individual portions. Braised lamb shanks

freeze exceptionally well for up to 3 months; thaw in the refrigerator overnight before reheating.

- 25.** More Recipes You Will Love: If you loved the tender meat and rich, comforting flavors of this braised dish, here are a few more fantastic savory recipes that I think you'll absolutely love:

## SWAPS & NOTES

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They are ideal for braising due to their bone-in structure and connective tissue, which breaks down into gelatin, enriching the sauce.

**Beef Broth:** Low-sodium beef broth is preferred to control saltiness.

You can use homemade beef stock for richer flavor.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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**Low & Slow Braising:** Patience is key!

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**More recipes:** [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/christmas-braised-lamb-shanks-tender-flavorful-herb-infusion/>