

Pork and Lamb Spitzada

When my parents arrived in the United States from Italy, they were immediately befriended by a young couple who lived next door. Frances and my mother fast became best friends and four years later when I was born Aunty Francis and Uncle George became my Godparents. My parents gave me the most beautiful gift in choosing Aunty Francis as my Godmother. She has been a devoted, faithful and ever present influence in my life. Her daughter, my cousin, Kathy has also been like one of my sisters all of my life. The friendship and love that my mother and Aunty Francis shared has always been an inspiration to me, through years, time and distance their love, respect and care for each other always kept them connected and close. After my parents moved to Texas, Aunty Francis and her husband Pug, a gentle, generous and loving man often visited just to spend time together and to celebrate anniversaries or special occasions. It is the memory of those beautiful times shared that continue to bring us all comfort now that mommy, daddy, Uncle George and Pug are all in heaven.

SPITZADA – with Pork

INGREDIENTS:

- ¼ - 1/3 cup Olive oil
- 3 large or 3 small red peppers
- 2 large or 3 small green peppers
- 3-5 pounds Pork butt, cut into chunks
- 1- 12oz. can of tomato paste
- 2 - 3 cups Red wine or Merlot
- 4-6 cloves of Garlic, peeled and chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a large saucepan add olive oil, chopped garlic and pork. Braise the pork, stirring frequently to keep garlic and pork from burning. When the pork is nicely browned, add the wine making sure there is enough to cover the bottom of the pan, you can deglaze the pan with the wine and then add the tomato paste, stirring in well. Let the meat simmer for about an hour stirring frequently. Remove the stems and seeds from the red and green peppers and cut into good size pieces (same size or a little bigger than the meat). As the meat simmers add the peppers to cook with the pork in the sauce, stirring frequently, the peppers will cook quickly. Continue to cook until the meat is tender. Add salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

NOTE: A variation on this dish that is equally delicious is to substitute lamb instead of pork and to substitute fresh or frozen peas instead of red and green peppers.

INGREDIENTS FOR SPITZADA WITH LAMB:

- Olive oil
- 3-5 pounds lamb shoulder, cut into chunks
- 5-6 cloves of Garlic, peeled and chopped
- 4 cups of peas, fresh or frozen (frozen are best)
- 2 cups Merlot or red wine (homemade wine works great, use enough wine to deglaze and cover the bottom of the pan)
- 6oz of tomato paste
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a large saucepan sauté olive oil and chopped garlic and braise lamb chunks stirring frequently. Add wine and mix well deglazing the bottom of the pan. Add tomato paste and stir into the wine until it is dissolved and mixed well. Let meat simmer for about an hour stirring frequently. As the meat becomes tender add the peas to cook with the lamb in the sauce. Cook until meat is tender. Salt and pepper to taste.