A Dish of Lamb Rib, Yogurt, Eggplant, Shoots of Young Peas.

We create a dish celebrating the versatility of lamb, but foremost celebrating Xinjiang’s flavors and cuisine. Predominately influenced by Uyghur cuisine, Xinjiang cuisine reflects the cooking style of different local ethnic groups. Lamb or mutton serve especially important ingredients in local delicacies. This dish is an ode to the flavors of lamb seasoned heavily with dried c. chinense, cumin, and ground sichuan peppercorn. The lamb rack is broken down into three parts: the loin, the ribs, and finally, the fat cap. Each cut is prepared with its own cooking method; braising, grilling, or frying. The result is a dish of tender lamb loin roulade, wrapped in fermented mustard green leaves, fried cumin lamb bone lollipop, and a trim of the lip-numbing mouth-meltingly spicy lamb fat cap, braised in *doubanjang* and then finished on a binchotan grill, accompanied by a cooling Beijing-style sour milk yogurt and a sweet vibrant puree of young pea shoots, counterbalancing the traditional fried and hoisin-braised eggplant.

(Serves 4)
Ingredients:

**LAMB LOIN**
1 Loin of Lamb, preferably American, or Australian
Leaves of Fermented pickled mustard greens
1 tbsp toasted cumin seed
1 tsp seafood seasoning
1 tsp Chinese chili powder, or cayenne pepper
1 tbsp ground sichuan peppercorn
S&P TT

**BRAISING LIQUID**
4 oz Sichuan Bean Paste, (extra for brushing)
2 oz peanut oil, preferably, if allergic, use corn
½ cup shao-xing rice wine, aged 3 years
2 tbsp chingkiang vinegar
3 tbsp chili garlic in oil
4 tbsp soy sauce, light
3 tbsp sesame oil
1 tbsp rice wine vinegar
1 tbsp sweetened black vinegar
2 tbsp fish sauce
2 tbsp seasoned seafood soy sauce
3 oz hoisin
3 cloves garlic, brunoise
3 oz shoot of young ginger
3 oz scallions, rough chop
4 oz shallots, brunoise
3 ea whole white pepper
2 tbsp dried garlic granulated
3 ea whole black peppercorn
1 ea bay leaf
8 oz dried hunan chili
½ cup H20
2 tbsp monosodium glutamate
1 tbsp chicken bouillon
6 tbsp sugar
Salt TT

**BEIJING YOGURT**2.5 g Lactic Bacteria (L. bulgaricus, S. thermophilus, L. acidophilus)
1.5 g Skim Milk Powder
0.5 g Sucrose
0.5 g Ascorbic Acid
2 cup whole milk
1 cup heavy cream
1 cup unsweetened soy milk

**EGGPLANT**1 whole eggplant, cut into rounds
2 oz shallots, minced
2 ea garlic, minced
1 oz young ginger, chopped
1 tbsp sweet sichuan bean paste
1 tbsp hoisin
1 tbsp spicy broad bean paste
3 tsp soy sauce, light
1 tsp seafood soy sauce
1 tsp black vinegar
1 tsp rice wine vinegar
3 oz rice wine, aged 3 years minimum

**PEA PUREE**
1 lb pea shoots, leaves only.
1 cup frozen English peas
1 tbsp chicken glace or chicken bouillon
2 tsp sugar
½ cup ice, enough to make viscous
1 tsp xanthan gum
Salt TT

Method:

Prepare the braising liquid by sautéing aromatics of shallots, ginger, garlic in enough oil to cover the pan, about 2 oz. Once melted, about 6 minutes over medium-low heat, bring temperature to high heat. Aromatics should acquire a deep nutty aroma. Deglaze with rice wine. Add semi-vicious ingredients (hoisin, bean paste, chili paste, etc) and reduce. Allow flavors to marry, about 5 minutes. Add rest of ingredients, and finally, h20. Allow braise to rest and chill. Vacuum seal with lamb bones and fat cap. Cook in a water bath at 143F for 56 hours. After braising the fat cap and bones for 56 hours, remove from water bath. Drain liquids. Finish the fat cap over high heat on a binchotan grill, with a smoking box of 50/50 alder and cherry wood. Flip constantly, until evenly charred, about 4-6 minutes depending on heat. Prepare a deep fryer at 370F. Lightly dust lamb bones with custard powder, and deep fry until dark mahogany and crispy. Remove and lightly season with kosher salt.

Incorporate all dry ingredients for yogurt. Heat liquid ingredients to a temperature of 180F, as soon as temperature is reached, remove from heat. Let chill to 115F – 120F. Add dry ingredients to a cup of chilled liquid ingredients, then incorporate back into the rest of chilled liquid ingredients. Incubate with incubator for 12 to 15 hours, until desired viscosity. Season with salt and sugar before serving.

Bring a large stock pot of water to boil. Season with salt until water tastes of the sea. Blanch pea shoots and English peas, until tender, about 30 seconds, and put into ice bath for 30 seconds until chilled. Drain. Blend all ingredients together with ice. Add hot heavy cream, chicken glace, slowly. Add xanthan gum to emulsify cream and water. Strain. Season. Reserve.

Prepare eggplant braising liquid in the similar technique (sauté aromatics, reduce semi-vicious ingredients, add h20 to desired viscosity). Deep fry eggplant and incorporate into braising liquid, without losing structural integrity of the eggplant. Be gentle. Let the eggplant absorb the flavors over low heat for 4 minutes. Vacuum seal for service. To reheat, add into water bath at 143F for 22 minutes.

Prepare the lamb rack by deboning the loin, splitting the bones separately and cleaning the bone (using a boning knife, scrape meat towards end of bone towards loin ligament, forming a lollipop), and removing the fat cap with silver skin from the loin. Add fat cap and bones to finished braising liquid, vacuum seal, and cook at 143F for 56 hours. With the loin, season generously with salt and pepper, followed by chili powder, cumin seeds, and Sichuan peppercorn powder. Wrap in fermented mustard green leaves, and form a roulade, using plastic wrap. Tie ends of plastic wrap and then put lamb loins inside a plastic bag and cryovac. Cook in a water bath at 135F for one hour. Remove and rest for 5 minutes. Cut into medallions.

Plate pea puree in a circular motion on the base of the plate. Garnish with two pieces of eggplant around the circle. Add two slices of lamb loin, one piece of grilled lamb fat, a spoonful of yogurt, and two fried lollipops. Garnish with wild radish blossoms, pea blossoms, wild nasturtium flowers, and garlic chive blossoms.

Chef Luther Chen

Chef Chen is a young chef who grew up in The 626, and discovered his passion for food, and pursued his education at the Culinary Institute of America in NY. following his dream while working at Georgia's only 5 star restaurant, the Georgian Room at Sea island resort, chef Chen grew to become a seriously professional cook. Shortly after, Chef Chen solo-trekked mainland china and Taiwan, discovering the art and beauty of authentic Chinese food. Now back in Los Angeles, Chef Chen has started a fine dining underground supperclub called Xian Wei, serving elevated authentic regional Chinese cuisine and is releasing a food truck named Shao Kao BBQ within the next month."

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