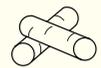


LEG OF LAMB

"CURANTO"



Log cabin, lean-to,
or hunter's fire



7

SERVES 4

- 1 leg of lamb with the bone removed, salted overnight
- 5 carrots
- 5 onions
- ½ celeriac
- 1 head of garlic
- salt and pepper
- juice of 1 lemon
- olive oil

Well, I won't lie to you. This recipe is challenging and cumbersome, and it took me quite a few tries to get it right. You have to do curanto for the fun of it, and you have to be willing to set aside the time that is required. You can use any vegetables and cuts of meat, but the curanto is obviously best suited for things that take time—see below for what I used.

—Nicolai

Build your *curanto* ("stony ground"): Dig a squarish hole 4 ½ feet (1 ½ m) deep, with sides about 1 ½ feet × 3 feet (½ × 1 m). Fill the bottom of the hole with large stones. Save the soil and collect 10 large stones for later use. In the woods fill a wheelbarrow with fresh branches with needles or leaves. Pull an old sheet out of the closet that you no longer need. Light a huge bonfire at the bottom of the hole. When the fire has burned to embers, throw the stones you have saved onto the embers and let them heat up.

The following should be done in one long motion, the faster the better: Put half of the branches on top of the hot stones. Place the meat, vegetables, and garlic on top of the branches, cover the produce with the rest of the branches, and place the sheet on top. Stretch the sheet out and place stones on the sides so that it does not slip. Pour soil on top—a good, thick layer. Wish yourself luck and do something else for the next 8–10 hours!

Carefully remove the soil until you can see the corners of the sheet. Lift up all corners at the same time so that you catch all the soil. Open the "oven" and enjoy the scent.

Take out the ingredients. Season everything with salt, pepper, olive oil, and lemon juice. Serve the lamb and vegetables as they are, with a sharp knife and a serving spoon.

