Aromatic Braised Lamb with Prunes and Pine Nuts

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Good, homey lamb stew with a fruit twist.

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 pounds lamb shoulder, cut into 1 1/2-inch cubes

Salt and freshly ground pepper

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 medium onion, finely chopped

1/2 cup dry red wine

1/2 cup water

2 teaspoons lemon zest, minced

1 Pinch ground clove

1 Pinch ground ginger

1 cup prunes, pitted, halved

1 cup boiling water

2 medium carrots, thinly sliced

2 whole parsnips, peeled, sliced (optional)

1/4 cup pine nuts

Carolyn T's Blog - Tasting Spoons:
http://tastingspoons.com

Servings: 5

1. In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil. Add half of the lamb, season with salt and pepper and cook over moderately high heat until browned on 2 sides, about 3 min-utes per side. Transfer to a plate and repeat with the remaining lamb.
2. Add the garlic and onion to the saucepan and cook over moderately low heat, stirring, until softened, 5 minutes. Stir in the wine, 1/2 cup of water, lemon zest, cloves and ginger. Return the lamb to the saucepan and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer over low heat until very tender, about 1 1/2 hours.
3. Meanwhile, in a heatproof bowl, cover the prunes with the boiling water. Let stand until softened, about 10 minutes. Add the prunes with their cooking liquid and the carrots and parsnips to the stew. Cover and simmer until the carrots are tender, about 20 minutes.
4. In a medium skillet, cook the pine nuts over moderate heat, shaking the pan a few times, until the nuts are toasted, about 4 minutes. Let cool.
5. Season the stew with salt and pepper and spoon into bowls. Sprinkle with the toasted pine nuts and serve.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 679 Calories; 43g Fat (57.1% calories from fat); 28g Protein; 44g Carbohydrate; 9g Dietary Fiber; 103mg Cholesterol; 127mg Sodium. Exchanges: 1 Grain(Starch); 3 1/2 Lean Meat; 1 Vegetable; 1 1/2 Fruit; 6 1/2 Fat.