



Gourmet Moussaka Al Caruso



Serves 8

INGREDIENTS FOR THE BEEF RAGU:

1 kg. stewing beef (preferably shank) cut in thin slices, across the muscle fibres
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 large carrot, finely chopped
1 large **celery** stalk, finely chopped
100 ml **red wine**
600 ml **beef stock**
300 g chopped tomatoes (in a carton)
70 g tomato paste
5 bay leaves
1 cinnamon stick
50 ml Greek virgin olive oil

INGREDIENTS FOR THE AUBERGINE LAYERS:

5 aubergines, sliced thinly
2 tbsp coarse salt
200 ml olive oil for frying

ALLERGENS HIGHLIGHTED IN BOLD

PREPARATION:

Slow-cooked beef ragu layered with delicate slices of aubergine and topped with luscious smoked aubergine béchamel takes this dish to a whole new dimension. We recommend cooking the ragu and fried aubergines a day ahead, and finish the dish the day of the serving.

DAY 1

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan. Sauté the carrot, onion, celery, cinnamon stick and bay leaves for 10 minutes on a low heat. Turn up the heat and add the meat. Brown on both sides for 5 minutes and pour in the wine. Simmer for 2 minutes and add the beef stock. Allow to simmer uncovered for 3-4 hours, over a very low heat, checking occasionally in case it needs more liquid. Once the meat can be shredded with a fork, add the chopped tomatoes, tomato paste, salt and pepper. Stir and reduce until all the liquid has evaporated for approx. 30 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick and bay leaves. Shred the meat with a fork once it has cooled.

Slice 5 of the aubergines and put into a colander standing in the sink, sprinkling each layer with a bit of the coarse salt. Leave them for 30 minutes so some of the bitter juice drains from the aubergines. Rinse the aubergines thoroughly and dry with a tea towel.

Fry the aubergines in olive oil in a frying pan in batches until browned on both sides. Remove each batch from the pan when ready and place on a bed of kitchen paper to absorb as much oil as possible overnight.