



Roots

Farm to Table Recipes from the Black Swan,
a Restaurant in the English Countryside

TOMMY BANKS



RIZZOLI
NEW YORK

This is a dish that I created for *Great British Menu* to celebrate Wimbledon, the lamb trimmed to represent the champion's guard of honor received after victory on center court. The taste of roasted lamb fat with sour turnip purée is something everyone should have on their table at least once. A lamb guard of honor is a great family roast for a Sunday lunch. You can ask your butcher to cut it into as many ribs as you like—here I've roasted two four-rib racks, aiming to serve four people two chops.



Lamb Guard of Honor

3 / SERVES 4

For the mint gel:

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup white wine vinegar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry white wine
 $\frac{1}{8}$ cup superfine sugar
.14 ounce gellan gum
50 mint leaves (preferably
apple mint)

For the pickled turnips:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup standard pickling liquor
(page 280)
12 baby turnips, thinly sliced

1 block of lamb suet (ask your
butcher), cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch dice
12 large pink fir potatoes
sea salt
2 x 4-rib racks of lamb,
French-trimmed (ask your
butcher), at room temperature
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons butter
sprig each of thyme and rosemary
vegetable oil for deep-frying
16 mint leaves (preferably
chocolate mint)
lamb sauce (page 277)

For the fermented turnip purée:

1 pound fermented turnips (page 225),
sliced, plus a couple of slices
to garnish
4 tablespoons butter ($\frac{1}{2}$ stick)
 $1\frac{2}{3}$ cups whipping cream

To prepare the mint gel, combine the vinegar, wine, sugar, and gellan gum in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Pour the mixture into a tall handheld blender cup and allow to set in the fridge.

In a large saucepan, slowly sweat the fermented turnips in the butter for 10 minutes until they have softened—be careful not to let them color. Add the whipping cream and slowly simmer to reduce by a third. Transfer all the ingredients to a blender and process until you have a smooth purée, then pass through a fine sieve. Set aside and keep warm.

Next, prepare the pickled turnips. Bring the pickling liquor to a boil in a saucepan and pour over the baby turnips. Leave to cool. In a large saucepan, warm the suet on very low heat. When all the fat has rendered out pass the fat through a fine sieve and keep warm in a pan. Take a turning knife and peel the potatoes in a barrel shape. Season them with salt and add to the pan of lamb fat. Slowly cook the potatoes in the lamb fat. The pink fir is a robust waxy potato; it will take a while to cook but don't be tempted to turn up the heat. Use the turning knife to see if they are cooked through—this could take 30 minutes. Leave the potatoes in the fat and return to the heat when you need them.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Score the fat on the lamb and season the racks heavily with salt. Place a large ovenproof frying pan over medium heat. Before the pan heats add the lamb fat side down. As the pan heats up the lamb fat will begin to render. When the lamb fat is nice and crispy put the pan in the oven for 7 minutes, then turn the racks over and cook for an additional 3 minutes. Remove from the oven, add the butter and herbs, and baste the lamb for 2 minutes so that it is covered in all the herby, buttery goodness. The lamb should be nicely cooked; if you have a thermometer check the temperature of the meat—in the very center of the widest

part of the loin, it should be 122°F. The residual heat from the outside of the meat will finish the cooking as the meat rests. Rest the lamb for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, deep-fry the (chocolate) mint leaves at 320°F for 20 seconds, or until crispy but not brown. Drain on paper towels and season with salt.

Remove the mint gel from the fridge and finish by blending in the (apple) mint leaves with a handheld blender. When it is vibrant green and well combined, pass through a fine sieve.

To serve, warm the potatoes and the sauce. Spoon the purée onto four serving plates, and add the potatoes, mint “crisps,” and drained pickled turnips. Place the lamb racks intertwined on a board in the middle of the table ready to be carved, with the mint gel alongside.

