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## Lamb Tagine

*Adapted from the cookbook **5 of the BEST** by Valli Little, This recipe is a perfect lazy winter afternoon treat. Nearly all of the cooking time is oven time giving you the afternoon to relax by the fire with a good book while the lamb shoulder slowly turns into a meltingly tender meal!*

3 ½ pounds lamb shoulder, trimmed and cut into 2 inch pieces  
1 large yellow onion, finely diced  
5 garlic cloves, finely diced  
1 bunch cilantro, leaves roughly chopped  
1 cinnamon stick  
1 teaspoon each ground cumin, ground ginger, sweet paprika, and saffron threads (crumbled)  
¼ cup olive oil  
1 teaspoon sea salt  
One 3-4 inch piece of orange peel, white pith removed  
4 cups canned chopped tomatoes, prefer homemade  
2 tablespoons tomato paste, no salt added  
1 ½ cups beef broth or stock, prefer homemade  
1 bay leaf  
2 tablespoons butter  
2 tablespoons honey  
2 cups canned chickpeas, rinsed very well and drained  
½ cup organic pitted green olives, drained well and cut lengthwise into fourths  
¼ cup chopped mint to garnish, optional

Combine the lamb, onion, garlic, cilantro, dry spices, olive oil and sea salt in a large non-reactive bowl. Add the lamb. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.

Heat a non-stick skillet over medium high heat, add the lamb in batches (don't crowd the pan or you'll steam the lamb), and fry until lightly browned all over. As the meat is cooked, place it in a tagine or oven safe casserole dish. Add the orange peel.

Drain the tomatoes, reserving the liquid. Set the tomatoes aside.

Combine the juice from the tomatoes with the tomato paste. Add this to the meat in the tagine or casserole dish along with the beef stock/broth and bay leaf. Stir to combine.

Cover and cook for 2 hours in the oven or until the meat is very tender.

Use a slotted spoon to remove the meat to a plate.

Pour the liquid from the tagine/ casserole into a fat separator and pour the liquid, discarding the fat, into a skillet over medium high heat.

Add the reserved diced tomatoes and butter to the liquid in the skillet. Bring to a boil and then turn the heat down to a simmer for 3 minutes.

Add the honey, chick peas, and olives. Cook stirring gently for 5 minutes.

Return the stew to the casserole, tagine, or other serving dish. Garnish with chopped mint, if using and serve immediately.

*Serves 6.*

Recipe Credit: **5 of the BEST: Celebrating Five Years of the World's Best Food Magazine**