

# Pickled onions and feta perfectly complement pulled lamb ragu



## Pulled Lamb Ragu Flatbread

Photos Susie Iventosch

### By Susie Iventosch

One Sunday last year, I was taking a stroll and came across a new restaurant near our house. After perusing the menu, I immediately ordered the pulled lamb sandwich that caught my eye. I'd never really had "pulled" lamb, although I've tried plenty of pulled pork and pulled chicken sandwiches – usually served barbecue style. Being a lamb lover, this was a hard one to resist. Rich and meaty, the flavor of this succulent and aromatic lamb was perfectly complemented by the pickled onions and feta cheese served with it! It was so good and I knew I'd have to figure out how to make it. The way I ended up slow-cooking the meat with jalapeños, shallots, garlic and seasoned with cumin, it turned out more like lamb ragu. In the end we just love it this way served over flat bread and topped with crumbled feta, toasted just until the cheese begins to brown and the sandwich is hot. Sometimes we spread the flat bread first with Boursin Garlic & Fine Herbs cheese before adding the meat. So delicious! The lamb slow cooks for out 5 hours, so you have plenty of time to enjoy the amazing aroma as it cooks until perfectly "fall off the bone" tender.

The nice thing about this dish is that you can prepare the

lamb and gravy ahead of time and freeze them either together or separately until you're ready to serve it. We like to make the sauce right when we shred the meat, but you can also save the braising liquid in the freezer and make the sauce at a later time. Any amount of work you can do ahead always makes it easier when you go to get dinner ready.

The lamb ragu is also delicious tossed with pappardelle for a hearty pasta dinner!



Susie can be reached at [suziventosch@gmail.com](mailto:suziventosch@gmail.com). This recipe can be found on our website: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>

## Pulled Lamb Ragu Flat Bread

(Serves 4)

### INGREDIENTS

#### Lamb

- 3 lbs. lamb shoulder
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 2 large shallots, chopped
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 2 jalapeños, seeded and coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper

#### Sandwiches

- 4 pieces of naan or your favorite flat bread
- 1 round of Boursin Cheese (Garlic & Fine Herbs) - optional
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley or cilantro (for garnish)
- 1 bunch sunflower sprouts, optional (for garnish)

#### Ragu Gravy

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large shallot, chopped
- 2 tablespoons gravy flour (or sifted all-purpose flour)
- 2 cups cooking broth from lamb, skim fat off the top (or whatever you have left of the braising liquid)
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup red wine

### DIRECTIONS

#### Lamb Ragu

Preheat oven to 285 F. Spray the bottom of a casserole dish that will hold three lamb shoulder chops laying flat with cooking spray. Evenly distribute shallots, garlic and jalapeños over the bottom of the dish.

Season lamb shoulder chops on both sides with salt, pepper, and cumin. Place them directly on top of the veggies in the casserole dish. Fill the dish with water just to cover the lamb. Wrap the dish tightly with foil.

Bake in preheated oven for 5 hours, or until the meat is done and falls off the bone. Remove from oven and cool completely. Refrigerate for several hours or overnight until the fat has congealed.

Once completely cold, remove the lamb from the refrigerator and skim off as much of the fat as possible. Transfer the lamb chops from casserole dish to a cutting board. Reserve the braising broth/liquid/gel.

Using two forks, shred the lamb and discard any bones and any extra congealed fat that is leftover. The meat can be prepared to this point and frozen or refrigerated for several days ahead of time.

Meanwhile, make the gravy.

#### Ragu Gravy

Heat oil in frying pan. Add shallots along with the herbs and spices and cook until the shallots are translucent and the herbs are fragrant, about 5-10 minutes over medium-low heat.

Slowly whisk in the flour and brown with the veggies for a few minutes, whisking all the while. Whisk in the reserved braising liquid along with any remaining veggies that are in the broth, and the red wine. Whisk well and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 5 minutes until slightly thickened. Add shredded lamb. Or, if you are making this ahead of time, cool completely and freeze or refrigerate until ready to use and then add the shredded lamb.

#### Assemble Sandwiches

Lay the flat bread out on a baking sheet. Spread the Boursin cheese over just the top side of the bread. Spoon the lamb ragu over the Boursin and top with the crumbled feta. Bake in a 400 F oven for about 8 minutes, or just until the cheese starts to brown and the lamb is heated through.

Serve with a garnish of minced parsley and/or sunflower sprouts.



# Making the most of your college visits

## By Elizabeth LaScala, PhD

As COVID protocols ease it is a great time to plan college tours. Campus tours are critical to the application process — this is the place where you will be spending a significant amount of your time for the next four years and there is no better way to get a 'feel' for the campus and surrounding area than an in-person visit. **Here are some tips:**

If you're a junior in high school and planning to apply this fall, make sure to schedule time to visit the admission's office. Email your regional admissions officer to let them know that you will be planning a visit and would like to introduce yourself. I would discourage a junior student from setting up an interview. If this is your first visit to campus I suggest you enjoy the tour free of the stress of an interview. How-

ever, if an on-campus interview is strongly encouraged, as it is at Washington University St. Louis, for example, then I would encourage a junior to prepare with their college advisor and take the opportunity. Otherwise, students should concentrate on digesting what they learn and processing how they feel about the college as the first priority. If the college makes it to your application list, and interviews are available, go for it then and prepare over summer or in the fall.

Think geographically when you plan — you can often visit multiple schools in one week or even a long weekend that are located close together. For example, in Colorado you can visit University of Colorado Boulder, University of Denver, Colorado College, Colorado School of Mines and Colorado State U Fort Collins.

Are there professors or

courses you are especially interested in? Reach out to see if you can sit in on a lecture. The same goes for extracurricular activities; perhaps there is a show or a game to watch or a concert to hear. And this has the added benefit of meeting other students who attend the school.

Explore the community around campus, have a coffee in town and people watch, especially if students tend to live off-campus at this college.

Even if you think you know what type of school you want, visit a school that is completely different. Looking at mainly large research universities? Visit a smaller liberal arts college. I have seen many students change their perspective when they do this.

Take notes on what you see, whom you meet and what you talk about while you're on campus—several months later, you are not going to remember the specifics, like the

name of that interesting professor that your tour guide mentioned, or the surprisingly good meal you enjoyed in the cafeteria.

Take photos and separate them into a college album to help you remember details of your visit.

School visits allow you to experience a campus firsthand rather than just remotely. And visits can help you distinguish yourself as an applicant by giving you the experience (and thus the content) necessary to help you write a truly unique "Why Our College?" essay. These are often the most important essays that will help you show why you and the college are a perfect fit. My college essay workshops each summer provide sample prompts and it is an eye opener to see how specific each college wants you to be about your reasons for applying.



Elizabeth LaScala, PhD personally guides each student through each step of selecting and applying to well-matched schools for undergraduate and graduate school study. Over the past two decades, Elizabeth has placed hundreds of students in some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the U.S. The number of clients taken is limited to ensure each applicant has personalized attention. Contact Elizabeth early in the process to make a difference in your outcomes. Write [elizabeth@doingcollege.com](mailto:elizabeth@doingcollege.com); Visit [www.doingcollege.com](http://www.doingcollege.com); or Call: 925.385.0562.

# Moraga resident wins Best Screenplay in film festival competition



Sandy Fox-Sohner

Photo provided

Moraga resident Sandy Fox-Sohner was named winner of the screenplay competition this month at the Vancouver International Women in Film Festival. Her script, "The Professor," tells the inspiring true story of Sofia Kovalevsky, a self-taught mathematician who dreamt of teaching mathematics at a university when universities did not allow women. In the late 1800s, she devised a daring escape from her homeland in Russia to make her mark in the West. She became the first female professor in Europe in this uplifting story of freedom and perseverance.

Fox-Sohner learned of this story while teaching high school mathemat-

ics. Some of the girls still had the impression that math is difficult for them because of their gender. In response, she lectured on famous women mathematicians, and the story of Kovalevsky inspired her and her students. The screenplay celebrates a brave woman who fought for equality and ultimately opened doors in education for other women to follow. It also celebrates those men, who, in the 19th century, made decisions based on merit, not gender or ethnicity, often risking their own careers to ensure justice and fairness prevailed.

A resident of Moraga for 37 years, Fox-Sohner is active in American Association of University Women -

Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette. She works on the organization's Tech Trek program, the science and math camp for middle school girls, and the annual AAUW-OML STEM Conference at Saint Mary's College. Dr. Kristen Beck, former mathematics professor at Saint Mary's, was involved in the organization of the STEM conference and provided accurate mathematical formulas for the screenplay.

Maria Sigrist, co-author, is a director in Switzerland. A co-producer in Germany is also attached to this project. A few additional producing partners are needed before filming can begin.

– J. Wake

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