



This Jan. 26 photo shows Guinness lamb stew with walnut Irish soda bread dumplings in Concord, N.H. Taking inspiration from classic Irish ingredients and dishes, this savory lamb stew has a rich broth made from beef stock, Guinness beer and fresh rosemary. And, soda bread-style dumplings are dolloped over the top.

Fresh take on Irish stew with lamb, Guinness and soda bread

By ALISON LADMAN
Associated Press

Chicken and dumplings is a wonderfully simple, deliciously comforting dish — a thick, meaty stew bubbling away beneath a patchwork of moist, pillowy dumplings.

So we decided to channel that comfort for a dish suited for St. Patrick’s Day. Taking inspiration from classic Irish ingredients and dishes, we came up with this over-the-top savory lamb stew with a rich broth made from beef stock, Guinness beer and fresh rosemary.

And dolloped over the top? Soda bread-style dumplings that are at once hearty and tender.

Like most stews, this one only improves with age. For a do-ahead option, prepare the stew as directed, but chill it after the pureeing and recombining steps. When ready to serve, return the stew to a simmer, then proceed with the dumpling portion of the recipe.

Guinness lamb stew with walnut Irish soda bread dumplings

- Start to finish:** 1 1/2 hours
Servings: 6
- 2 pounds lamb stew meat, cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
 - Kosher salt and ground black pepper
 - 1 pound mixed mushrooms, sliced
 - 1 large yellow onion, diced
 - 2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
 - 2 celery stalks, diced
 - 1 small potato, peeled and diced
 - 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 - 1 tablespoon finely minced fresh rosemary
 - 12-ounce bottle Guinness beer
 - 3 cups low-sodium beef stock
 - 1/2 cup chopped toasted walnuts
 - 1 1/2 cups white whole-wheat flour
 - 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
 - 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
 - 1 1/2 cups buttermilk
 - 1 egg
 - 3 tablespoons butter, melted

Season the lamb with salt and pepper. Heat a large Dutch oven or heavy bottomed pot over medium-high. Add the lamb and sear until well browned. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the lamb to a plate. Add the mushrooms to the pot and cook until well browned and tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to trans-

fer mushrooms to a bowl and set aside.

Add the onion, carrots, celery, potato, cumin and rosemary to the pot. Cook until beginning to brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Return the lamb to the pot. Add the Guinness and broth. Cover and cook for 45 to 60 minutes, or until the lamb is tender and the vegetables are cooked through. Using tongs, transfer the chunks of lamb to the bowl with the mushrooms.

Working in batches if necessary, ladle the vegetables and broth into a blender and blend until smooth. Return the mixture to the pot, along with the lamb and mushrooms. Return to a low simmer.

In a medium bowl, stir together the walnuts, both flours, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and baking soda. In another bowl, whisk together the buttermilk, egg and melted butter. Gently mix the buttermilk mixture into the flour mixture. Using a spoon or a cookie/ice cream scoop, dollop the dough on top of the stew. Cover and cook for about 10 minutes, or until the dumplings are cooked through.

Nutrition information per serving: 680 calories; 220 calories from fat (32 percent of total calories); 25 g fat (9 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 155 mg cholesterol; 66 g carbohydrate; 9 g fiber; 8 g sugar; 46 g protein; 780 mg sodium.

Graceland brings Elvis back to his Las Vegas home

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Graceland will always be home, but Las Vegas is set to be Elvis Presley’s home away from home yet again.

Officials with Elvis Presley Enterprises Inc. and the Westgate Las Vegas casino-hotel revealed details Thursday of plans for “Graceland Presents Elvis: The Exhibition — The Show — The Experience” expected to open April 23, 59 years to the day when Elvis first performed in Las Vegas.

Some 28,000 square feet will house a rotating display of memorabilia and artifacts rarely seen outside Graceland’s Memphis, Tennessee, property. In addition, the very showroom where Presley performed several hundred sold-out shows when the casino-hotel was first known as The International and later the Las Vegas Hilton will be revamped by the Graceland crew to look much like it did in Elvis’ day, complete with semi-circle booths.

Plans include a revamped Elvis Presley sanctioned wedding chapel, too, inside the Westgate Las Vegas, with Graceland taking over its operations.

Certainly Elvis-themed wedding chapels already dot Las Vegas and there has been no scarcity of exhibits and shows, including a short-lived tribute by Cirque du Soleil in 2012, but organizers say this is the real deal.

Tickets go on sale Thursday. The exhibit is expected to cost \$22 and tickets for performances start at \$49.

Back in Vegas

“We walk into everything with ‘what would Elvis want’,” said Joel Weinshanker, managing partner of the company that has owned a majority of Elvis Presley Enterprises since November 2013. “Absolutely positively, he would want to be back in Vegas.”

In his place to perform in the same 1,600-seat showroom will be an actor singing Elvis songs, accompanied by backup singers and an orchestra.

David Siegel, CEO of Westgate Resorts, said it was destiny that he bought the property in July 2014, decades after seeing Elvis perform there, accompanied by his ex-wife whose godfather happened to be Elvis’ manager, Col. Tom Parker.

And when he did buy it, he said he wanted to bring Elvis back.

As luck would have it, in a town built



This Wednesday photo shows simple and bedazzled suits once worn by Elvis, many while performing on stage in Las Vegas, displayed at the Westgate Las Vegas Hotel, originally the International Hotel in Las Vegas.

on it, Weinshanker wanted the same thing and saw in Siegel someone willing to reinvest in the property where Elvis lived on the 30th floor for months of the year.

“It’s really going to be the authentic Elvis experience,” he said.

Pieces of Elvis

Angie Marchese, director of archives for Graceland, said the exhibit will be the largest Elvis exhibit outside Graceland. The clothing will come straight from Elvis’ closet in most cases.

Among the Vegas-centric items expected to make an appearance:

— A wooden sign larger than even Elvis. His manager paid for the 24-foot tall image of a guitar-playing Elvis to advertise the singer’s first performances in Las Vegas in 1956 at The New Frontier, since demolished. For the eight years Elvis Presley Enterprises has owned it, it’s been mostly in storage at Graceland because of its sheer size.

— The tablecloth contract. To ink the, essentially, \$1 million a year contract to perform at The International, Parker and the casino-hotel’s owner Kirk Kerkorian retreated to a nearby coffee shop to go over the details and make it official, signing where there was no dotted line — on the tablecloth itself — complete with coffee cup stains.

— A two-piece black tunic and single-button black suit. For his first performances at The International, Elvis wore two downright demure outfits — the black tunic during the show and the black suit for the news conference afterward. Neither have felt the Las Vegas air since Elvis wore them on July 31, 1969, she said.

Memories of the man

“Those of us that lived it, Elvis never left the building,” said Dominic A. Parisi of the performer’s lingering presence.

He won’t say how old he is, but he was old enough to ready Elvis’ rooms at the casino-hotel with meals (an early evening breakfast of well-done eggs, well-done toast, well-done bacon) and drinks, heavy on the bottled water, from 1972 to 1976 while he performed there.

Now director of the casino-hotel’s room service and specialty restaurants, Parisi recalled his encounters and talks with the King fondly.

“He loved it here. He loved the hotel. He loved Vegas,” he said.

Every once in a while, Parisi said he goes up to the 30th floor to Elvis’ old suite, has a glass of wine and reminisces. “Hopefully he’s listening,” he said.

Bourbon on St. Patty’s?

By ELIZABETH KARMEL
Associated Press

Here’s a cocktail in honor of St. Patrick’s Day. But you’re going to have to cut me some slack.

Why? Because I know what you’re expecting. Any cocktail for this holiday should include either Guinness beer or Irish whiskey, right? Logically, that makes sense. But my whiskey of choice is always bourbon, so I tend to gravitate to cocktails built on that. The good news is that if you want to stay true to the spirit of the holiday, you could substitute Irish whiskey.

Because Irish whiskey is triple distilled, it’s smoother and lighter than other varieties, such as Scotch whisky. And that means it mixes well.

So why did I go with bourbon? To me, the major difference between an Irish whiskey like Jameson and a good bourbon is that bourbon has more flavor (think rich round vanilla and brown sugar notes) and complexity (toasted oak, smooth and soft), often with a hint of sweetness. And those flavors mix well in cocktails without being lost to the other ingredients (which I think a lighter whiskey would).

And so I give you the bourbon slush! Never heard of it? Not surprising. It’s from Northern Kentucky and I had never heard of it until I was introduced to it by my friend, Kat, who grew up in the region. Just beware: It is a potent cocktail. You will want to drink many of them, but try to show restraint or you will be regretting it in the morning.



Kat’s bourbon slush

Start to finish: 10 minutes, plus freezing
Servings: 24

- 2 cups strong black tea, hot
- 2 cups sugar
- 12-ounce can frozen lemonade concentrate
- 6 ounces (half a 12-ounce can) frozen orange juice concentrate
- 750-milliliter bottle bourbon
- 5 cups cool water
- Ginger ale, to taste

In a freezer-safe pitcher, stir together the tea and sugar until the sugar is dissolved. Add the lemonade and orange juice concentrates, as well as the bourbon, then stir until dissolved. Cover the pitcher with plastic wrap, then freeze overnight, or at least 6 hours. The slush is ready when it is firm throughout; it won’t freeze solid.

When ready to serve, scoop 1/2 cup of the slush into julep cups or tumblers, then top with ginger ale. Store the slush in the freezer between servings.

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