



Osso buco, means "bones with holes, or hollow bones" ? which is probably why it is never translated on menus. Slow-braised veal would sound both more appetising and accurate, yet those bones (not in fact hollow at all, but full of rich, delicious marrow) are the dish's crowning glory ? anyone who sends the plate back to the kitchen without investigating their interior has missed out on the best bit.

Ingredients:-

(Serves 4)

2 tbsp olive oil

25g flour, to dust

4 pieces of veal shin, about 4cm thick

50g butter

1 onion, finely chopped

1 carrot, finely chopped

1 celery stick, finely chopped

1/2 head of garlic, cut horizontally

2 strips of lemon zest

4 sage leaves

200ml white wine

200ml good chicken stock

For the Gremolata

1 unwaxed lemon, zest finely grated

1 garlic clove, very finely chopped

3 tbsp flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped

Pinch of sea salt

Method:-

(1) Use a casserole dish wide enough to hold the meat in one layer and place it over a high heat, and add the oil. Put the flour on to a small plate and season generously, then use to coat the meat. When the oil is hot, add the meat to the pan and brown well on both sides until golden and crusted. Set aside on a plate.

(2) Turn the heat down and add three quarters of the butter to the pan. When melted, add the onion, carrot and celery, plus a sprinkle of salt, and cook until soft. Add the garlic half, lemon zest and sage to the pan and cook for a few minutes more.

(3) Turn up the heat then add the wine to the pan. Return the meat, standing it on top of the vegetables, and bubble until the wine has reduced by half. Pour in the stock and bring to a simmer.

(4) Turn the heat right down, cover and simmer for one and a half to two hours, carefully turning the meat over every 30 minutes, until it is tender enough to cut with a spoon. Meanwhile, mix together the gremolata ingredients.

(5) Dot with the remaining butter and allow to melt into the sauce, then serve with the gremolata and risotto alla milanese or Polenta.