

# Lamb Adobo

*“This dish has had the most impact on how I cook. Years ago while going from market to market in central Mexico, I was talking to the ladies in the fondas. I had been making an adobo sauce for some time now, and I asking one doña about what made her adobo so special. She asked how I would make one.*

*After sharing the basics of my recipe, she told me I was overcomplicating the sauce, and the only way to make something better would be to make it a simpler way.*

*I guess you could call it a light-bulb moment. That afternoon I learned more about my cooking than I had learned in my life, and from that day on I have tried to make food that was simple yet elegant using the best ingredients and giving them a chance to shine.”*—**JEFF SMEDSTAD: ELOTE CAFE**

Serves 4

## **For the adobo:**

12 garlic cloves  
4 cups orange juice  
6 ancho chiles clean with stems removed  
1 3-inch stick of canela [Mexican cinnamon]  
2 teaspoons black pepper  
2 teaspoons cumin  
2 tablespoons Mexican oregano  
2 bay leaves  
1/8 teaspoon ground clove  
2 tablespoons cider vinegar  
2 tablespoons brown sugar  
2 tablespoons salt  
cooking oil

## **For the lamb:**

4 lamb shanks  
salt and pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F.
2. In a dry saucepan large enough to accommodate all the ingredients and over medium-high heat, toast the garlic until lightly browned all over then add remaining ingredients and simmer until the chiles are softened. Cool slightly and puree until very smooth.
3. Salt and pepper the lamb shanks on all sides.
4. Add oil to a large pan. Heat the pan to medium high and add the lamb shanks. Brown the shanks all over. When they are well browned and fragrant, add the adobo sauce, cover and bake at 325 F for about four hours or until fork-tender. You can refrigerate them and slowly reheat the next day or serve immediately. Clean off some of the grease on the meat with a spoon first.