

Mark Hix

Venison shank curry

Serves 4



This comforting dish tastes as good as it looks and is packed full of flavour from the spices.

- 4 deer shanks
- plain flour, for dusting
- 2-3 tbsp vegetable or corn oil
- 1 tsp coarsely ground black pepper
- black seeds from 12 or so green cardamom pods (or substitute ½ tsp ground cardamom)
- 2 black cardamom pods (optional)
- small piece of cinnamon or cassia stick
- 2 tsp fenugreek seeds
- 1 tsp black or yellow mustard seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- 1 tsp ground turmeric (or 1 tbsp freshly grated)
- 2 tbsp ghee
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 2-3 medium green chillies, finely chopped, seeds and all
- 6 garlic cloves, crushed
- 40g ginger, scraped and finely grated
- pinch of saffron
- 2 tbsp dried fenugreek leaves or kasoori methi

- 2 tbsp curry leaves
- 1 tbsp tomato purée
- 1-1.2 litres beef stock
- 1 tbsp tamarind paste
- 3-4 tbsp peanut butter
- 2-3 tbsp chopped coriander leaves
- basmati rice, to serve

Season 4 venison shanks and lightly dust with plain flour. Heat 2-3 tbsp vegetable or corn oil in a large frying pan over a high heat and fry the shanks for a few minutes, turning them regularly until nicely coloured.

Meanwhile, put the spices, up to and including 1 tsp ground turmeric, in a large lidded ovenproof casserole dish or wide sauté pan. Cook over a medium heat for 2-3 minutes, turning regularly with a spoon until they are lightly browned.

Add 2 tbsp ghee, 2 finely chopped medium onions, 2-3 finely chopped medium green chilli, 6 crushed garlic cloves, 40g ginger, pinch of saffron, 2 tbsp fenugreek leaves and 2 tbsp curry leaves, and cook with a lid on for 4-5 minutes until the onions have softened, stirring every so often.

Add 1 tbsp tomato purée, 1-1.2 litres beef stock and 1 tbsp tamarind paste, bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the venison and top up with a little more stock if needed so the shanks just submerge. Bring to the boil, cover with a lid and simmer gently for 1-1½ hours or until the shanks are almost tender, turning them once or twice and topping up with a little water if necessary.

Remove the lid and simmer for a further 30 minutes to reduce the sauce until the venison is tender but still holding its shape. Take a ladle of the sauce and blend in a liquidiser until smooth. Return to the pan with 3-4 tbsp peanut butter and stir through over a low heat. If the sauce isn't thick enough remove the venison and simmer until it thickens.

Transfer to a serving dish and scatter with 2-3 tbsp chopped coriander leaves. Serve with basmati rice.

Mark Hix MBE

Chef, food writer and advisor

Mark Hix is a celebrated chef and award-winning food writer. Our Captain, Darren, met Mark when they were at catering college together in Dorset, and have been friends ever since.

Follow him online and social media for more recipes and event updates.

Website markhix.co.uk

Instagram [@markhix](#) Substack

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Mark is frequently lauded as one of Britain's most eminent restaurateurs with an unrivalled knowledge of ingredients with provenance. He is an award-winning author and food writer with 12 cookbooks to his name, the latest of which, *Hooked*, regales stories of fishing from his childhood through to the present day. He has an award-winning weekly recipe column in *The Telegraph Magazine*, with previous contributions to print including *City AM*, *GQ*, and *The Independent on Saturday*, for which he was the food writer for 14 years. You'll also find his monthly columns in *Marshwood Vale* and *Dorset Magazine*.

After overseeing top London restaurants *The Ivy*, *Scotts*, *Le Caprice* and *J Sheekey* for 17 years, Mark opened his iconic HIX restaurants which included the likes of *Tramshed*, *Hixter*, *Mark's Bar* and *HIX Oyster & Chop House*, which sadly closed in the pandemic. After closing his last site, *The Oyster & Fish House*, in December of 2024, he is now focussed on his events, writing and advisory roles. He also hosts an array of culinary events including the unique *Mark's Kitchen Table* which takes place at his Charmouth home, as well as taking guests foraging for wild food and fishing off the Dorset coast.