

Get your goat

October 22, 2011

STEVE MANFREDI sings the praises of the world's most widely eaten meat.

Australia is the largest goat meat exporter in the world but when it comes to domestic consumption, it's not exactly mainstream. In fact, apart from migrant and religious communities, it hardly registers when planning home menus.

Goat is the most widely consumed meat in the world. The versatile animal can adapt to many climates and terrains and there are few - if any - religious restrictions associated with it, unlike taboos in some communities about eating beef and pork.

The largest consumers - China, India and Pakistan - are also the largest producers but they have little, if any, left over for export.

Australia's goat meat industry began with irregular supplies of wild bush goats, dairy and fibre goats. With the introduction of Boer goats from South Africa in the mid 1990s, the quality of available goat meat has steadily increased.

"Capretto" means kid goat in Italian. Meat and Livestock Australia has adopted the term to mean goats with a carcass weight up to 12 kilograms. "Chevon" is used for heavier, older animals aged six months to 18 months.

Capretto has a lamb-like flavour. It's lean and pink and suited to quicker cooking. Chevon is full flavoured with a firmer texture and better suited to slow cooking.

smanfredi@smh.com.au

twitter.com/manfredistefano

PAPPARDELLE WITH KID GOAT RAGU

This is a dish by Gabriele Taddeucci, the head chef at my new restaurant, Balla. If goat is unavailable, substitute very young suckling lamb shoulders.

2 kid goat shoulders, each about 1kg

50ml extra virgin olive oil

1 garlic clove, sliced

4 celery sticks, cut in 1cm cubes

1 carrot, peeled and cut in 1cm cubes

2 brown onions, peeled and cut in 1cm cubes

500ml white wine

1 tsp thyme leaves

1 cup water

Salt and freshly cracked black pepper

1kg pappardelle or other wide ribbon pasta

100g pecorino

2 bird's eye chillies

Cut each shoulder in 3 pieces, leaving the bone in. Heat olive oil in a large pot. Lightly fry garlic and vegetables. Raise heat and add goat pieces, moving vegetables and meat constantly so they don't stick. When meat has developed good colour, add wine, thyme, salt, pepper and water. Cover and cook slowly for 90 minutes. Remove meat and remove from bone. Shred and return to sauce. Cook for 10 minutes until meat starts to break up. Season to taste and set aside. Cook pappardelle in salted boiling water until al dente. Drain and toss with sauce. Serve with grated pecorino and finely sliced chilli on top.



Pappardelle with kid goat ragu, chilli and pecorino. Photo: Marco Del Grande

Serves 8 as a first course

Wine Chianti classico or sangiovese.

KID GOAT BRAISED WITH CAPSICUM

100ml extra virgin olive oil

1 clove garlic, peeled and sliced

3 bay leaves

1 bird's eye chilli, minced

1kg kid goat meat from legs and shoulders, cut into bite-sized pieces

200ml dry white wine

2 red capsicum, trimmed and cut into 1cm slices top to bottom

4 medium-sized ripe tomatoes, chopped

1 tsp oregano, chopped

Salt

Heat olive oil in a braising pan. Add garlic, bay leaves, chilli and goat pieces. Gently fry for 10-12 minutes until well browned. Add wine and stir until liquid is almost all absorbed. Add capsicum and stir well until it wilts slightly. Add tomatoes, oregano and a few good pinches of salt. Stir well and simmer for 15-20 minutes until tender or longer if required. Once cooked, remove from heat and allow to sit for 10 minutes. Serve with bread and salad.

Serves 4 as a main course

Wine Dolcetto, either Australian or Italian.