

By Guest Columnist Chef Rachel Willen



I love spring. It's the tentative, yet warm, wet kiss of seasons. Who doesn't want the weather to warm, the sprouting bulbs to wend their way through the earth to find sunlight, and bare trees lining streets to explode into canopies of green? Yet, for me spring comes with one long melancholy sigh as I realize I will be seeing much less of my slow cooker over the next several months and much less of the comforting fall-apart meat I love that is the result of the low-slow process the utilitarian cooker gives us. While I was researching, testing and planning weeks of spring recipes for my blog, foodfixkitchen.com, I came across a recipe for a lamb stew that starting me thinking about a classic French "navarin printanier" we made in culinary school. Navarin means lamb or mutton stew and when vegetables are added, particularly blushing new spring vegetables like asparagus, baby turnips and English peas, that's when the "printanier" or spring part comes in.



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