

Slow Roasted Duck with Cherry Aspic

Serves 4

1 4lb. duck, cleaned and giblets removed from cavity
2 Carrots, peeled and sliced course
1 Onion, coarsely chopped
2 -3 Garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp. Dried marjoram (1 Tbl. fresh, minced)
1 tsp. Dried basil (2 Tbl. fresh, minced)
6 oz. Dry red wine
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
½ lb. Bing cherries, pitted and cut in half
Sugar

Note: Dried herbs work best in this recipe

Pre-heat oven to 375°. Remove excess fat from inside of cavity and pierce skin all over, being sure not to pierce the meat. Season the duck by rubbing skin and inside cavity with salt. Place in a roasting pan or casserole dish and arrange carrots, onions and giblets (not liver) all around. Sprinkle herbs, garlic, salt, pepper and a little sugar over vegetables and add wine and 1 cup water. Cover and roast duck for about 2 hours or until duck is tender, removing cover for the last 30 minutes. Remove from oven and place duck on a platter to cool. Pour off liquid and vegetables into a saucepot and boil over high flame until reduced by half. Strain to remove solids, pressing on them to extract all the liquid into a fat separator (if you don't have one, pour into a bowl and refrigerate (in the coldest part of the refrigerator) for about 2 hours so that the fat will rise to the surface and harden enough for easy removal). Discard the vegetables.

Meanwhile, prepare the cherries and place in a bowl or small loaf pan. Pour liquid from the duck over cherries, leaving the fat behind (if you have refrigerated it, remove fat and heat just to the boiling point before using). Chill in the coldest part of the refrigerator, stirring every ten minutes or so to distribute cherries until it starts to jell. Cover and refrigerate until set. Remove from refrigerator and dip container in hot water for about 30 seconds. Unmold and cut into cubes or slices. Arrange decoratively around the duck and serve. You may also carve the duck prior to presentation.

Though this dish takes some time to prepare, it isn't complicated and as it's not served hot, it may be done in advance. If you chill the duck, bring it to room temperature before serving. For that I suggest carving the duck to serve.