

FARM SHOP

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RECIPES NOVEMBER 2015

CONFIT-STUFFED PHEASANT BREASTS

Ingredients for four people. Two oven-ready pheasants, 75g duck or goose fat, two or three sprigs of thyme, bay leaf, 12 whole peppercorns, large glass of white wine, two crushed garlic cloves, four slices Parma ham, four slices of lemon, eight sage leaves, 50g butter, dash of olive oil, splash of Madeira.

Method. The day before you want to eat place the pheasant legs, duck fat, herbs, peppercorns, garlic and white wine in an oven-proof dish, cover tightly and cook on a low heat (170C gas 3) for three hours. Allow to cool slightly, then pull the meat off the bones, shred with two forks and mix with a tablespoon of the strained cooking juices. Allow to cool completely. Open up each pheasant breast with a sharp knife, flatten, cover with baking parchment and beat out gently with a rolling pin. Place a quarter of the leg meat on each and roll up. Place two sage leaves on each breast, roll in Parma ham, and secure the end of the ham with a lemon slice held in place with a cocktail stick. Fry briskly on all sides to brown in the butter and oil, then turn down the heat and continue cooking for another 15 minutes, turning every couple of minutes. Remove, and deglaze the pan with the Madeira to make a sauce.

PHEASANT CASSEROLE

Ingredients for four. Four pheasant breasts, 12 shallots, two rashers smoked bacon, half a bottle red wine, 300ml beef stock (use a stock capsule), 80g button mushrooms, quartered, large faggot of thyme, parsley and bay leaves, butter, large wine glass of port, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper, dessertspoon redcurrant or bramble jelly.

Method. Dice the bacon and add to a large, preheated pan with a small knob of butter. As it begins to cook add the shallots. Season the pheasant breasts generously and add to the pan, turning to brown, and at the same time place the wine in a pan over a high heat and allow to reduce slightly. Add this to the pheasant with the stock and herbs, fry the quartered mushrooms in butter and add them as well. Transfer everything to a casserole, cover and cook for two hours at 180C gas mark 4. Place the pheasant, mushrooms and shallots on a serving dish, reduce the cooking liquid by half over a high heat, add the port and reduce by half again. Stir in the jelly, whisk in about 30g of butter and pour over the meat to serve.

PHEASANT SOUP WITH WINTER VEGETABLES

Ingredients. Two pheasant carcasses, 75g butter, small swede, two small turnips, three medium carrots, three large onions, six sticks of celery, large handful of curly kale, large faggot of herbs – parsley, thyme and bay leaves – 12 black peppercorns, water, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper.

Method. Roast the carcasses for 10 minutes at 200C gas mark 6 and transfer to a large saucepan. Add the herbs, peppercorns, two sticks of the celery, one of the onions and one of the carrots and about two pints of water, bring to the boil and simmer for an hour and a half, breaking up the carcasses as they cook. Strain off the liquid. Grate the swede, turnip and carrot, finely chop the kale, de-string the celery and chop it and the onions very finely. In a large, clean pan melt the butter, add the vegetables and sweat for a good 10 minutes over a medium heat. Add the strained stock, simmer for 30 minutes, season and serve.

VENISON STEAKS WITH PORT AND RED WINE SAUCE

Ingredients for four. Four venison steaks (as large or as small as you like), quarter bottle red wine, tumbler of port, tablespoon dried mushrooms – such as porcini or chanterelles – tablespoon fresh chopped thyme, heaped tablespoon finely-chopped shallot, butter, dash of olive oil, tablespoon redcurrant, quince or apple jelly, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper.

Method. Place the mushrooms in a bowl with enough water to cover and leave to rehydrate for three to four hours. Remove and chop finely, then add to a pan with any remaining soaking liquid, the wine, port, thyme and shallot. Set over a high heat and reduce by two-thirds, strain and reserve. Melt a generous knob of butter in a frying pan (preferably a ridged one), add a dash of olive oil to stop it burning, season the steaks and fry for about four minutes each side. Remove and wrap in foil. Keeping the heat moderately high add the wine and port reduction to the pan, scraping in the cooking juices, and stir in the fruit jelly. Allow the sauce to bubble down until reduced by about half. Finally whisk in a generous knob of butter. Place the steaks on warmed plates and spoon a little of the sauce over each. Serve with roast potatoes and strongly-flavoured greens such as kale or cavalo nero.

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