

Ancient Egyptian Roasted Duck

In ancient Egypt, ducks were considered a symbol of fertility and renewal, and their offerings were believed to bring blessings of abundance to the Pharaoh and his people.

This recipe is amazing and would make a great alternative to turkey or goose for the holidays.

Note: If you want extra crispy skin place the duck uncovered in the refrigerator for 8-10 hours so the skin gets nice and dry.

Ingredients

1 whole duck around 5 lbs.
A few stalks of fresh herbs
(choose from marjoram, dill, thyme, or savory)
2 cloves of garlic
6 green onions (scallions)
2 Tablespoons of salt
¼ cup honey
Oil

Cooking Utensils

Knife and cutting board
Measuring cup
Measuring spoons
Kitchen twine
Scissors
Aluminum foil
Roasting pan with rack
Basting brush
Meat thermometer
Small cookpot or
Microwave-safe bowl

Pre heat the oven to 425°. Chop the garlic and onions into large pieces.

Remove the giblets and trim off the excess skin at the neck. Make sure the skin is dry. See note above about how to get extra crispy skin. Using a sharp knife, score the skin of the breast in a crosshatch or diamond pattern. Each cut should be about 3/4" apart. Make sure the cuts are shallow enough to cut only the skin. Do not cut into the meat. You can make a few shallow cuts on the underside of the duck and anywhere it is fatty.

Rub 2 teaspoons of salt on the inside of the cavity of the duck. Rub a heaping teaspoon on the outside of the duck. Make sure salt gets into all of the cuts made in the skin.

Stuff the duck with the herbs, onions and garlic. Tuck the extra skin over the end of the cavity and truss the legs with kitchen twine. Either trim the wing tips or tuck them under the bird to keep them from burning.

Line the bottom of a roasting pan with crumpled aluminum foil (this will catch the fat and keep it from burning). Lightly oil the roasting rack, then place the duck on it, breast side up.

Place the roasting pan in the oven and roast for 15 minutes. Lower the heat to 350° and roast for an additional 15 minutes. Turn the duck over so that its back is facing up and roast for 15-20 minutes. Then turn the duck over again so that the breast is

facing up. In a cookpot or a microwave-safe bowl warm up the honey. Remove the duck from the oven and baste with the warm honey. Return the duck to the oven and roast for an additional 10-20 minutes. Baste with the warm honey a few times during this stage of cooking. You can cook it longer depending on how you like your duck, but the breast meat should be at least 130°. While the duck is cooking make the sauce.

For the sauce

I found deglet noor dates held up better for the cooking process than Medjool: dates.

Ingredients

1-2 Tablespoons olive oil
1 cup green onion (scallion)
1 ½ cups red wine
2 Tablespoons red wine vinegar
15 fresh figs or figs preserved in honey
15 dates

Cooking Utensils

Knife and cutting board
Measuring cup
Measuring spoons
Cookpot
Spatula or wooden spoon

To make the sauce

Mince the green onions. Cut the figs and dates into small pieces. The sauce can be prepared up to this point in advance. Place the olive oil in the cookpot and heat over high heat. Add the minced green onions and cook for 5 minutes. Add the wine and bring to a simmer. Lower the heat to medium and cook for 5 minutes. Add the vinegar, figs, and dates. Cook for 10-15 minutes or until the sauce is reduced by half. Remove the cookpot from the stove. The sauce will continue to thicken as it cools.

Remove the duck from the oven and let it rest for at least 10 minutes so all the juices can be reabsorbed back into the meat. Place the duck on a serving platter and serve with the sauce.