

Duck Confit with Potato Puree and Charred Shallots

An elegant and classic French bistro dish, sure to be the star of the table. Slow-cooked duck legs, tender and delectable, served with creamy potato puree, a delightful combination of rich flavours and textures.

Serves: 8

Preparation time: 20 minutes including 12 hours curing

Cooking time: 3 hours

Difficulty: Easy

Ingredients

For the Duck Confit

150g coarse sea salt
½ tsp coriander seeds
½ tsp green peppercorns
1 fresh bay leaf
1 sprig of rosemary
5g thyme stalks
1 cinnamon stick
1 star anise
8 free range duck legs (1.8kg)
Peel of 1 orange or Clemengold

2 kg duck fat (melted)
1 garlic head, cut in half
5g thyme
2 sprigs rosemary
1 bay leaf

For the Potato Puree

1.5kg potatoes (mashed)
400g coarse sea salt
250ml pouring or whipping cream
50g salted butter
2 cloves of garlic
5g thyme

For the Charred Shallots

4 shallots, halved with skin on

Method

It is recommended to prepare the Duck Confit a day in advance. To make the Duck Confit: Place the coarse salt, spices and herbs into a pestle and mortar, and pound until fragrant and slightly less coarse. Arrange the duck legs in a single layer on a flat tray and sprinkle over salt and the citrus peel. Rub the salt mix all over the duck legs, making sure they are covered. Wrap the tray with cling film and refrigerate for 12 hours.

The next day - remove the duck legs from the tray and remove all the salt using a clean cloth or paper towel. Discard the salt (to avoid your duck being too salty,

ensure you remove all the salt).

Preheat the oven to 120°C / Fan 100°C / Gas Mark 1-2. Prepare a Le Creuset Cast Iron 31cm Signature Oval Casserole, by evenly distributing the thyme stalks, bay leaf, rosemary, and the halved garlic head in the base. Arrange the prepared duck legs on top of the herbs and pour over the duck fat. Heat on medium until the fat warms, then transfer to the oven and cook for 3-3 ½ hours.

Remove the duck legs from the oven and place each leg onto a tray. Allow the duck fat to cool. Once cooled, strain the duck fat through a sieve and store it in an airtight container in the fridge. Discard the herbs and garlic. Cover the duck legs and store in the fridge.

To make the Potato Puree: Preheat the oven to 180°C / Fan 160°C / Gas Mark 4. Place the salt on a flat baking tray. Lay the potatoes in a single layer on top of the salt and bake in the oven for 90 minutes. Once the potatoes are cooked through, remove the tray from the oven and immediately cut the potatoes in half and scoop out the cooked flesh.

Press the mixture through a potato ricer or fine sieve until it reaches a smooth, consistent mash texture. Cover and set aside.

In a small saucepan, combine the cream with the garlic and thyme. Bring the mixture to a simmer for 5 minutes, then strain and set it aside.

To complete the potato puree, transfer the potato and cream mixture to a medium saucepan. Using a spatula, stir gently over low heat until it becomes smooth and creamy.

To make the Charred Shallots: Preheat the oven to 200°C / Fan 180°C / Gas Mark 6. Place a frying pan over medium heat and add a splash of olive oil. Place the shallots flesh side down and fry until golden for about 5 minutes. Place them into the oven and cook for 5-10 minutes until soft and cooked through.

To reheat the legs, heat a toughened non-stick frying pan with a teaspoon of the duck fat. Place the legs skin side down, allowing the skin to crisp. Then turn the legs and heat the flesh side for about 5 minutes.

Serve the duck confit with the potato puree, charred shallots and store-bought cranberry jelly.

Cook's Notes

The duck fat can be strained, stored in an airtight container or jar and refrigerated to be used two more rounds of confit.

The salt that the potatoes were baked on can be cooled after cooking and stored in an airtight container and reused multiple times for making potato puree.