



Ginger Duck

from Amanda Hesser, adapted from BaBa

Serves 4, without leftovers

- 1 duck (thawed in the refrigerator), giblets removed
- 1 onion, peeled and cut in half, or 3 shallots
- 2 stalks celery, cut into 3-inch-long pieces
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 8 coins fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon black peppercorns
- 3 star anise
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup sherry

The day before you want to serve, stuff the duck with the onion and celery. Place the duck, breast side up, in a large soup pot with enough water to half cover it. Add the ground and fresh ginger, peppercorns and star anise, and bring to a boil. Cover and reduce the heat so that it simmers gently for an hour.

After one hour, turn the duck over. Add the sugar, soy sauce and salt. Continue simmering for another hour. Turn duck once again and simmer until tender and almost falling apart, about another hour. Turn off the heat and, when cool enough, remove duck from pot and place in a roasting pan. Cover and refrigerate until the next day.

Pour the broth into a container and chill overnight. A layer of fat will form on top. Scrape off and discard. With what remains, I make brown rice as a side dish with the duck. It can also be used in soups or frozen for months.

Before serving, bring duck to room temperature in roasting pan. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Add the sherry and 1 cup of the defatted duck broth to the roasting pan and place in the oven. Roast uncovered for 30 to 45 minutes, basting occasionally with the juices from the pan. If the skin has retracted from the breast meat, you might want to tent a little foil over that. I boosted the heat up to 425 degrees for the last 10 minutes. The duck is done when it is heated through and the skin is crisp and chestnut brown.

Transfer the duck to a serving platter and eat with brown rice and a watercress salad dressed with olive oil and sherry vinegar.