

Braised Duck with Vegetables Recipe

Ingredients: Serves 4-6

One 2.5kg duck
Vegetable oil, for passing through
½ cup soy sauce, plus more as needed
1 whole star anise
One 3-inch cinnamon stick
6 cups chicken stock or canned chicken broth
1 cup rice wine or dry sherry
½ cup sugar
3 scallions, trimmed and cut in half
Three ⅛-inch-thick slices peeled fresh ginger
3 small dried hot red chilies
1 teaspoon ground white pepper
10 Chinese dried black mushrooms, soaked in hot tap water
until softened, drained and stems trimmed
16 baby bok choy or bok choy hearts
2 medium carrots, peeled and cut into wedges 1½ inches long
and ½ inch thick
¾ cup sliced canned bamboo shoots, cut before measuring
into slices 1½ inches long and ½ inch thick, drained and rinsed
1 tablespoon cornstarch, optional

Method:

To prepare the duck, discard the neck, gizzard and extra fat. Using a cleaver, chop the duck in half lengthwise. Cut off the wings. Cut off the drumstick and thigh portions at the hip joints. Chop each half of the duck body into 3 pieces. You will have 10 pieces of duck. Rinse the duck under cold running water, and pat it dry with paper towels. Heat a heavy-bottomed casserole or Dutch oven over high heat. Add enough oil to come about 2 inches up the sides of the pot, and heat it to 180°C. Place the ½ cup soy sauce in a bowl, and dip each piece of duck in it (the soy sauce adds both color and flavor). Set the duck pieces aside and add enough extra soy sauce to the bowl to bring it back to ½ cup. Set the soy sauce aside. In batches without crowding, add the duck pieces to the pot, and cook until the skin turns golden, about 2½ minutes. Using a wide wire-mesh strainer, transfer the duck to a colander to drain. Discard the oil. Return the pot to high heat. Place the duck wings, star anise and cinnamon stick on the bottom of the pot. (They will act as a rack for the rest of the duck and keep it from sticking to the bottom). Add the rest of the duck, the ½ cup soy sauce and the stock, rice wine, sugar, scallions, ginger, dried chilies and white pepper. Place the mushrooms on top, and bring the liquid to a boil. Cover the pot, and reduce the heat to medium-low, so the broth bubbles gently. Cook for 1 hour, until the duck is quite tender but not falling off the bone. Uncover the pot, turn the heat to high and boil to reduce the sauce by two thirds, until it becomes glossy and syrupy, about 20 minutes. If the sauce has not reduced enough after 20 minutes, transfer the duck and mushrooms to a plate and set it aside, covered with aluminum foil to keep warm; continue reducing the sauce until syrupy and glossy. Using a slotted spoon, remove the scallions, ginger, star anise, cinnamon stick and chilies and discard. While the sauce is reducing, prepare the vegetables: Bring a large saucepan of lightly salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the bok choy and cook until crisp-tender, about 1½ minutes. Using a mesh strainer, transfer the bok choy to a colander to drain. Arrange the bok choy on a serving platter, placing the leafy tops in the center. Add the carrots to the saucepan and cook until crisp-tender, about 1½ minutes. During the last 10 seconds, add the bamboo shoots. Using the

mesh strainer, transfer the carrots and bamboo shoots to a colander to drain. Add the carrots and bamboo shoots to the pot. If the sauce is still too thin, dissolve cornstarch in 3 tablespoons cold water in a small bowl, stir into the pot and cook just until the sauce thickens. Using a slotted spoon, place the duck and mushrooms in the center of the bok choy. Spoon the sauce and vegetables over the duck. Serve immediately.

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