

Braised Grouse with Bacon and Sage

Ruffed grouse have been called “Wild Chicken of the Adirondacks” or “road chicken” and indeed you can substitute wild caught grouse in most chicken recipes. Grouse roasts nicely and can also be sauteed (think Grouse Marsala). Keep in mind that grouse has less fat than domesticated chicken and is smaller, so cooking time may vary from a chicken recipe. Chicken recipes that cook with liquid (braising or sauces) are often a good way to cook grouse to ensure moistness. The following recipe brings out all of the delicious flavor of grouse...



Ingredients

- 4 boneless, skinless grouse breast halves
- 8 slices of bacon
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 cup white wine
- 1/2 cup chopped shallot (or 1/4 cup red onion)
- 4 cloves chopped garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon chopped sage
- ground black or white pepper to taste
- 3 tablespoons flour

Directions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

In a large, oven-proof skillet (i.e cast iron fry pan) fry the bacon until almost crisp but not overly browned, over medium-high heat. Remove bacon and set aside. Leave 1-2 tablespoons of the bacon drippings in the pan and discard the rest. Place the grouse breasts in the pan and brown them quickly, about 2 minutes per side. Remove the grouse from the skillet and wrap each grouse breast with 2 pieces of bacon, securing them with a toothpick if necessary. Add the remaining ingredients to the pan and scrape up any bits off the bottom of the skillet with a wooden utensil. Remove from heat and add the grouse back to the pan. Place the oven-proof skillet in the preheated oven and roast uncovered for 45 minutes. When done, remove the grouse from the pan and keep warm on a separate plate loosely covered with aluminum foil.

Put the skillet on a burner over medium heat and whisk the flour into the pan juices, stirring constantly until thickened. Serve the pan gravy over the grouse breasts. This dish tastes excellent over wild rice. Serves 4.