

#108: Fowl Play

**Crispy Smoked Quail Salad with Bourbon-Molasses Dressing
and Spiced Pecans**

Susan Spicer, Rosedale/Bayona

Marinated Quail:

- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 tablespoon bourbon
- 4 quail, partially deboned (about 5 ounces total)

Whisk together the liquid ingredients in a small bowl to make a marinade. Place the quail in the marinade and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Drain the quail, then cold smoke for about 30 minutes. The quail should not cook in the process.

Bourbon-Molasses Dressing:

- ¼ pound smoked quail wing and thigh bones
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 2 tablespoons apple cider or cane vinegar
- 1 tablespoon walnut vinegar (if unavailable, add an additional tablespoon cider vinegar)
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped shallots
- 2/3 cup pure (not extra virgin) olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tablespoon bourbon

Brown the bones in the oven then place in a small pot and cover with the chicken stock and 1 cup water. Bring to a boil, then lower heat and let simmer until reduced to 3 tablespoons of syrupy liquid. Strain into a bowl and whisk in molasses, vinegars, shallots and olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper and stir in the bourbon.

Spiced Pecans:

- 1 cup pecans
- 2 teaspoons melted butter
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

In a small bowl, toss pecans with the butter and other ingredients. Spread out on a small baking sheet and roast in a 325° oven for about 10 minutes, until lightly toasted. Stir and let cool. Pecans should be crisp and lightly candied.

Pickled Red Onions:

- 1 cup red wine vinegar
- ½ cup honey
- 1 star anise pod
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ jalapeño pepper
- 1 peeled red onion, halved and cut into ¼-inch slices
- Pinch of salt

In a small pot bring the vinegar and honey to a boil, then add the other ingredients and stir to mix well. Simmer on low heat for about 5 minutes, then pour into a container and let steep. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Rice Flour Batter:

- ½ cup rice flour
- ½ cup ice water
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Pinch pepper

Whisk the ingredients together and set aside.

To Cook Quail:

1 quart vegetable oil for frying

In a large deep skillet, pour in enough oil to submerge the quail pieces. Heat the oil to 350 degrees. Cut each marinated quail in half, then pat dry on paper towels. Just before assembling the salad, dip the quail in the Rice Flour Batter, letting the excess batter drip off. Fry the quail for 3 to 4 minutes, turning once. Drain on paper towels and cut quail into quarters (2 legs and 2 breasts).

To Assemble The Salad:

4 cups mixed greens, washed and dried

Bourbon-Molasses Dressing

¼ cup Pickled Red Onions

½ cup sliced celery hearts and leaves

1 ripe pear, cored and cut into 16 wedges (4 per quarter)

Fried Quail

Spiced Pecans

Toss the mixed greens with Bourbon-Molasses Dressing, Pickled Red Onions and celery. Place four pear wedges on each plate. Divide salad between plates and arrange quail pieces on the salad. Drizzle with a little more dressing and sprinkle with Spiced Pecans.

Serves 4.