

## Braised Duck Legs in Red Wine

6 duck legs  
3 tablespoons herbes de Provence  
1 bottle full-bodied, dry red wine  
1 large shallot  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 bay leaf

6 fresh thyme sprigs  
4 cups chicken stock  
4 cups beef stock  
1½ teaspoons arrowroot  
Salt and pepper to taste

Because commercial herbes de Provence often does not include the essential ingredients, I make my own using equal amounts of dried thyme, rosemary, savory, fennel seed, lavender, and tarragon. If you use a commercial version, be certain it has fennel seed, which is the most prominent flavor for this dish.

Pound the herbs together with some salt and pepper in a mortar and pestle or with a rolling pin. Dry the duck legs with paper towels, and rub the herb mixture into each leg. Cover with foil and let marinate overnight in the refrigerator. Remove the duck legs from the refrigerator an hour or two before you are ready to cook them, bringing them to room temperature.

Preheat the oven to 375°. Place the legs skin-side up in a deep baking pan that can also be placed on the flame. The pan should be just large enough to hold the legs in one layer. Roast for 1 hour. Turn the legs skin-side down and roast another 10-20 minutes until the top skin is nicely browned. Pour off all the duck fat. This can be saved and refrigerated for future use.

While the duck is roasting, mince the shallot and heat the olive oil in another pan. Cook the shallot until golden, and add the chicken and beef stocks, the bay leaf, and the thyme sprigs. Bring to a boil and reduce to about 5-6 cups. Heat the wine in another saucepan to the simmer.

Turn the duck legs skin-side up. Pour the wine and 2 cups of the stock over the roasted duck legs. There should be enough liquid so that the meat is submerged, but the skin should be exposed. Roast another 45 minutes to an hour until the meat is very tender. Remove the legs from the pan and keep warm.

Pour the remaining stock into the roasting pan, and boil on top of the stove to reduce it a bit more. Remove a few tablespoons of the liquid into a cup and dissolve the arrowroot in it. Stir the arrowroot mixture into the boiling liquid, and continue cooking until slightly thickened. The sauce should not be thick, but just have a slight liaison to it. Strain the sauce through a sieve into another pan, continuing to heat it. Taste for salt and pepper.

Arrange the duck legs on a bed of mesclun or small greens on serving plates, and ladle a generous portion of sauce over each leg and greens. Serve any extra sauce on the side.