

Roasted Quail with Port Sauce

Ribier and Exotic black grapes are two varieties that are delicious with quail, but experiment with your choice of available grapes. While seedless grapes taste fine, seeded varieties may have more flavor. To remove the seeds, simply slice the grapes in half and lightly scrape out the seeds with the tip of a knife.

ROASTED QUAIL

8 fresh quail

¼ teaspoon salt

⅛ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

4 shallots (white onions), minced

½ cup (3 oz/90 g) seeded and coarsely chopped black grapes

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

6 tablespoons (3 fl oz/90 ml) olive oil

PORT SAUCE

2 cups (12 oz/375 g) halved and seeded black grapes

1 cup (8 fl oz/250 ml) plus 2 teaspoons port

2 cups (16 fl oz/500 ml) chicken stock (see glossary)

4 shallots (white onions), minced

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, at room temperature

2 teaspoons cornstarch (cornflour)

salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

1. To roast the quail, preheat an oven to 450°F (230°C).
2. Season the quail inside and out with the ¼ teaspoon salt and ⅛ teaspoon pepper.
3. Mix together the 4 shallots, coarsely chopped grapes and lemon juice, and spoon 1–2 tablespoons of the mixture inside each bird. Tuck the wing tips under the backs, and truss the quail.
4. Heat the olive oil in a large roasting pan in the oven for 5 minutes. Place the quail on their sides in the roasting pan. Roast for 15 minutes, turning to the other side every 5 minutes. Place the quail breast-up and roast another 5 minutes, or until the juices run pink when the thigh is pierced. Remove the quail to a serving dish, and let rest for 5 minutes before serving.
5. To prepare the port sauce, combine the grape halves, all but 2 teaspoons of the port, the chicken stock, and the shallots in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce the temperature and simmer 2 minutes.
6. Remove the grapes with a slotted spoon, and set aside. Bring the sauce to a boil, and cook until reduced to about 1 cup (8 fl oz/250 ml).
7. In a small bowl, mash the butter and cornstarch to a smooth paste. Add a little at a time to the sauce, whisking constantly. Boil gently for 1 minute.
8. Add the remaining 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of port, and season with the salt and pepper.
9. Spoon the sauce over the roasted quail, and serve.

Serves 4

1 quail with port sauce per serving: Calories 420, Protein 29 g, Carbohydrates 22 g, Fiber 1 g, Total fat 21 g (Saturated 6 g, Monounsaturated 10 g, Polyunsaturated 3.5 g), Cholesterol 110 mg, Sodium 230 mg.

▲ *1 Meat, 1 Fruit*