



Guy Watson and Jane Baxter's warm pheasant salad with pomegranate and walnuts

'The beauty of this elegant recipe is that gently poaching the pheasant in stock adds moisture to the meat. Combining it with the flavours of bright pomegranate, heady cardamom and sweet,

meaty walnuts is wonderfully exotic, and the bitterness from leaves such as rocket, mustard and crisp chicory will offer a pleasing contrast of textures and tastes.

This is definitely the recipe to pull out to impress dinner guests who will appreciate a more modern, but nonetheless delectable, approach to game'

Thomasina Miers

Warm pheasant salad with pomegranate and walnuts

Extract from Guy Watson and Jane Baxter's **Riverford Farm Recipes for Everyday and Sunday** Published by Fourth Estate

I worked briefly at Stephanie Alexander's restaurant in Melbourne, where there was a dish similar to this on the menu. The dressing, in particular, was amazing, and I've always tried to re-create it—this is the closest I've got. Pheasant is available



Feeling plucky? Dress your pheasant in an aromatic pomegranate sauce and serve with a flourish

from November to January, and it can be bought from good local butchers (they may be able to help you with preparing the birds for this recipe, too). Poaching the breast is a good way to stay in control of how quickly it cooks—you don't want to overcook and dry out the meat. If you can't get pumpkin oil, use a nut oil such as walnut or hazelnut instead. Serve with kale and potato cakes or a root-vegetable mash.

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 2 pheasants, legs and breasts removed
- About 1 litre chicken stock
- 1 tablespoon pumpkin oil
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon truffle oil
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce
- Seeds from 1 cardamom pod, crushed
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 100g mixed salad leaves (our Riverford salad bags, at this time of year, generally contain

rocket, pak choi, golden mustard, winter purslane, Ashbrook and dandelion)

Seeds from half a pomegranate
2 tablespoons toasted walnuts

Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6 and roast the pheasant carcasses for 30 minutes until browned. Put in a pan with enough chicken stock to cover them. Bring to a simmer and cook for 1½ hours. Then strain the stock and reserve. Remove the skin from the pheasant legs and simmer in the reserved stock for 1 hour until the leg meat falls off the bone. When cool enough to handle, strip the leg meat and set aside.

Take half the pheasant stock and reduce it to about 200ml. Mix with the pumpkin oil, vinegar, truffle oil, soy sauce and cardamom. Season well and add the leg meat to this dressing. Remove the skin from the pheasant breasts and poach in the remaining stock until slightly pink, about 10–15 minutes. Remove from the pan and slice.

Warm the leg meat a little in the dressing. Remove the leg meat from the pan and toss with the salad leaves. Arrange on a plate with the sliced poached breasts and sprinkle with the pomegranate seeds and walnuts. Drizzle over the remaining dressing.

And to drink...

Mourvèdre-based wines are great with game. The Massaya winery in the Bekka valley is a new venture between two local Lebanese wine makers, Château Bellefont-Belcier in Saint-Emilion, Bordeaux, and Le Vieux Télégraphe in Châteauneuf du Pape. Its top wine, the 2008 Massaya Gold Reserve (£36), is a delicious blend of Mourvèdre, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah that would be a superb match for this dish's bold flavours.



Chosen by Nick Page of Berry Bros & Rudd (0800 280 2440; www.bbr.com)