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DUCK RAGÙ BIANCO WITH LEMON AND CHIVES

Difficulty: Easy

Serves: 4

Prep: 1 hr

Cooking: 20 mins



INGREDIENTS

For the Ragù Bianco

- 1 whole duck
- 1½ onions (or a combination of shallot and onion), finely diced
- 2 celery stalks, finely diced
- 1 large carrot (or a few small), finely diced
- 4 garlic cloves, finely diced
- A few springs of fresh thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 bunch chives
- Zest of one lemon
- 1/2 cup of white wine + more
- 1 litre duck stock*
- Salt and pepper

For the stock:

- 1-2 carrots with their stems, coarsely chopped
- 6 cloves of garlic, smashed
- 1 large yellow onion, quartered
- 3 sticks of celery and any unused ends/leaves, chopped
- A few sprigs of whatever herbs you have on hand, like parsley, thyme, oregano, and a bay leaf (any other aromatics or scraps you have laying around like lemon or parmesan rinds can go in too)
- Chilli flakes, if desired
- Salt and pepper

To serve:

- Extra virgin olive oil
- Finely grated pecorino

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 230 degrees.
2. Break down the duck. Using a sharp knife, cut away any excess fat, remove the neck and wings, then separate the duck into 2 breasts and 2 legs. Remove the back bone and ribs and set aside with the neck and wings. Continue to trim any excess fat.
3. Place the reserved duck wings, neck, backbone and ribs on a sheet pan or large baking dish, drizzle with oil, and season with salt and pepper. Roast until golden brown.
4. Remove from the oven and transfer to a large pot along with carrots, onions, garlic, celery, herbs and whatever else you have for the stock.
5. Pour a glug of wine (or water) onto the pan and scrape up any of the fond (caramelized browned bits) and add the drippings to the stock pot as well.
6. Cover everything with water, season with salt, peppercorns and a pinch of chilli flakes, if using. Bring to a strong boil and then reduce to simmer, skimming any fat from the top with a spoon as it rises.
7. Simmer stock until the liquid has reduced and is deeply flavourful, about 2 hours. Strain.
8. Meanwhile, salt the duck (breasts and legs) and add it, skin-side down, to a large, cold dutch oven. Turn the heat to medium low to gradually render the duck fat, reserving any excess as it cooks.
9. When the fat is rendered and the skin is golden brown, remove the duck and set aside.
10. Retaining some (but not all) of the duck fat, add the diced vegetables and let the soffritto sizzle a little and begin to steam for 5 minutes or so. Reduce heat to low and cook, stirring regularly, until you are left with a rich paste. Deglaze with wine and cook until evaporated.
11. As the wine reduces, add in fresh bay and thyme (or other fresh aromatics of your choice).
12. Nestle the duck back into the pot and cover with broth, cover loosely with a lid and simmer over low heat, stirring occasionally until the ragù is well flavoured and the duck can be pulled apart (1-1.5 hours). Season to taste.
13. Remove the duck from the sauce. Rest and then shred meat with a fork, and add it to the ragù.
14. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta to al dente.
15. Remove the pasta with tongs (if draining, reserve some pasta water to add to the sauce) and add to the ragu. Toss to coat adding pasta water as needed to loosen the sauce and emulsify. Toss in the chives and lemon zest. Season to taste.
16. Garnish with a generous sprinkling of pecorino and a drizzle of good quality extra virgin olive oil.