

MALLARD ROAST

Duck Roast is a veritable classic in Keralan cuisine but, intriguingly, almost no traditional recipe ever prescribes a duck to go in an oven! The roasting happens in a pan and the gravy that coats it is thick and fragrant with roasted spices and coconut milk. Mallard demands careful (though not complicated!) cooking but has an assertiveness of flavour that works fabulously with spice. This is delicious served with spiced crispy chips and a Thoran, a stir-fry of veg, spices and coconut and, given the season, made with Brussels sprouts.

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 2-3)

- ❖ 2 mallard, jointed into legs on the bone and breasts off-the bone, all skinned
- ❖ 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- ❖ 1" ginger, grated
- ❖ 1 tbsp vinegar (any vinegar is fine)
- ❖ ½ tsp turmeric
- ❖ 1 tsp salt, plus a little extra
- ❖ 250ml game, chicken or vegetable stock
- ❖ 1½ tbsp coconut or vegetable oil
- ❖ 1 onion, peeled and sliced into half rings
- ❖ 75-100ml coconut milk

- ❖ *Masala:*
1 tbsp coriander seeds, 3-4 dried red chillies, 1 tsp black peppercorns, 1 tsp fennel seeds, 1" stick of cinnamon, 5 cloves, 3 green cardamoms, 8-10 curry leaves.

DIRECTIONS

1. To make the *masala*, toast all ingredients except the curry leaves in a medium-hot frying pan and, when fragrant, add the curry leaves and turn out the heat. When the curry leaves have crisped transfer everything to a cold plate to cool. Grind to a fine powder in a spice or coffee grinder.
2. Combine the ground *masala* with the crushed garlic, grated ginger, vinegar and turmeric along with just enough water to create a thick paste of coating consistency.



Kerala Mallard Roast, Brussels Sprouts Thoran, Spiced Chips

3. Rub the duck pieces with a thorough but thin coating of the paste and leave to marinate for 1 hr or longer. Put the remaining paste in a saucepan with the stock, bring to the boil then simmer gently for about half an hour.
4. Meanwhile fry the onions in 1 tbsp of the oil with a sprinkling of salt until golden brown then remove from the pan.
5. Add the remaining ½ tsp of oil and when hot fry the duck legs for 3 mins per side until browned, remove from the pan and repeat with the breasts but only for 2 mins per side. Keep aside, covered with foil, to rest.
6. Pour the stock into the pan and reduce by two-thirds. Add the duck pieces and the onions along with the coconut milk and cook over a medium heat for about 5-10 mins until the gravy is little more than a glossy coating for the meat. The dish is ready to serve.

SEASONAL SIDE

BRUSSELS SPROUTS THORAN

Heat ½ tbsp coconut or vegetable oil in a sauté pan or wok. When hot add 1 tsp black mustard seeds, 1 dried red chilli and 10 curry leaves, and stir-fry until the mustard seeds start to pop. Add 50g finely chopped shallot and 1 finely chopped green chilli, and sauté over a medium heat until the onion is golden. Now add 3 tbsp grated coconut and continue to cook until the coconut just starts to brown. Pour in a splash of water followed by 200g shredded Brussels sprouts. Stir a couple of times then allow to cook for about 5 mins (adding a splash or two of water as required) until the sprouts have softened to the preferred consistency. Season with salt and pepper and serve.