

Quail

Wooden Spoon Competition, March Crown AS. XXXII

Original Recipe taken from Cookery Book II Harleian MS. 4016, ab. 1450 A.D. (Page 75), from Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books, edited by Thomas Austin, found in A Collection of Medieval and Renaissance Cookbooks compiled by Duke Cariadoc of the Bow and Duchessa Diana Alena:

Quayle rosted. ¶ Take a Quayle, and sle him, And serue him as thou doest a partrich in all Degre. His Sauce is sauce gamelyne.

Partrich rosted. ¶ Take a partrich, and sle him in e nape of the hede with a fethur; dight him, larde him, and roste hime as ou doest a ffesaunte in the same wise, And serue him forth;

Sauce gamelyne. ¶ Take faire brede, and kutte it, and take vinegre and wyne, & stepe e brede therein, and drawe hit thorgh a streynour with powder of canel, and drawe hit twies or thries til hit be smoth ; and en take pouder of ginger, Sugur, and pouder of cloues, and cast erto a litul saffron and lete hit be thik ynogh, and thenne serue hit forthe.

Translation:

Quail roasted. Take a quail, and slay him, And serve him as you do a partridge in all degree. His sauce is sauce gamelyne.

Partridge roasted. Take a partridge, and slay him in the nape of the head with a feather; prepare him, lard him, and roast him as you do a pheasant in the same way, And serve him forth;

Sauce gamelyne. Take fair bread, and cut it, and take vinegar and wine, and seethe the bread therein, and draw it through a strainer with powder of cinnamon, and draw it twice or thrice until it be smooth; and then take powder of ginger, Sugar, and powder of cloves, and cast thereto a little saffron and let it be thick enough and then serve it forth.

Interpretation:

Quail

1 tsp. lard or butter

Gamelyne sauce

Rub lard or butter over quail, roast the quail in 350°F over until the juices run clear. Serve with Gamelyne sauce.

Gamelyne Sauce:

2 Tbs. fine bread crumbs

1/4 cup wine

1/4 cup vinegar

1 tsp. ground cinnamon

1 Tbs. Sugar

1 tsp. powdered ginger

1/2 tsp. ground cloves

15 threads of saffron

Combine bread crumbs with wine and vinegar and let stand for 5-10 minutes to soften the bread crumbs. Mix in remaining ingredients, blend until smooth.

Notes:

The original recipe for the partridge calls for lard to be used on the bird prior to roasting, this is mainly to help keep the moisture inside the flesh during cooking. Butter can easily be used for this same purpose.

The original recipe for the gamelyne sauce calls for soaking the bread in the wine and vinegar and pushing (drawing) it through a strainer three times. This effectively breaks the bread down into crumbs. Taking fine bread crumbs and soaking them in the wine and vinegar will produce the same end product.

Additional Notes of Interest:

The flavor of the flesh of quail, and for any other bird, is highly dependent on the tactics it takes fleeing danger and its migratory habits. Quail instead of taking to flight when fleeing danger, take to running. If they do take flight, they land only a short distance away. The species of quail that do migrate, only make short flights, and are known to "island hop" across the Mediterranean. Thus they have a flesh that can be said to be "the optimum point, in many opinions, between the blandness of barnyard fowl and the pungency of more athletic wild birds" as noted in *Food by Waverly Root*.

The quail that is commercially farmed in both Europe and America today is a subspecies of the Common quail (*Coturnix coturnix*: found through most of Europe, Asia and parts of Africa) called *Coturnix coturnix japonica* of Japan. This subspecies has been domesticated for centuries in Japan, selective breeding of this subspecies has produced a bird "that matures very quickly and females have been known to lay eggs only 12 weeks after they themselves were hatched."

References:

[A Collection of Medieval and Renaissance Cookbooks](#) compiled by Duke Cariadoc of the Bow and Duchessa Diana Alena_

[A Miscellany](#) 6th edition, by Cariadoc and Elizabeth. Chicago, 1992

[Take a Thousand Eggs or More](#), Volume 2; edited by Cindy Renfrow, 1990

[Food](#), Waverly Root, Smithmark Publishers, New York, 1980

[Encyclopedia of the Animal World](#) Elsevier International Projects Ltd., London, 1972