

Duck Hunting Smoked Duck & Andouille Gumbo

It's the crack of dawn, thirty-two degrees, a stiff north wind is blowing and a light mist is falling. You ask why I have a smile of on my face? Duck season is open. Don't get me wrong I'm not an avid hunter. I didn't grow up going out to the blind. I'm an occasional hunter but all it takes is once to be hooked. Part of the allure is just being miles away from civilization, away from the hustle and bustle of city life. No cell phone, no television and if you're lucky, enough guys to get up a poker game and good whiskey to sip. One of my all time favorite things to eat is Braised Teal in a Sauce Rouillee. Sauce Rouillee is Cajun French for rusty gravy. Teal are the best eating ducks around and the recipe is so simple. It is nothing more than a few lightly seasoned teal browned in a Dutch oven in a little oil. You then add a little chopped onion, maybe some chopped garlic and you continue to brown the ducks. You add some water, cook until the water has evaporated and the ducks and onion continue to brown basting the ducks throughout the process. You add more onion and repeat the process several times until the ducks are tender. You end up with this incredibly rich, dark gravy. This cooking method allows the true flavor of the ducks to shine, which is the ultimate compliment to any ingredient. Another one of my favorite ways to enjoy duck is in a gumbo. The recipe below is a recipe I created when I was the chef at Charley G's in Lafayette. The creative twist on this recipe is to smoke the ducks prior to adding them to the gumbo. At the time I did this it hadn't been done before. Unusual considering how much we smoke meat in Louisiana. If you don't have a hunter in the family, don't worry I use a domesticated duck for this recipe.

Smoked Duck & Andouille Gumbo

Smoking meats is one of the greatest pleasures known to a food lover, and it's not as difficult as one might imagine. You can intensify the smoky flavor of any dish by making a stock out of the bones of the meat you have smoked, as I have done in this dish.

Ingredients:

One 5 to 7 pound duckling	½ cup chopped green bell pepper
3 tablespoons Pat's Spice Blend	1 tablespoon minced garlic
¾ gallon smoked duck stock*	1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 cup dark roux	2 teaspoons hot sauce
1 pound smoked andouille, ½ inch cubes	1 teaspoon salt
1 cup chopped onions	½ cup chopped green onions
½ cup chopped celery	¼ cup minced parsley
	4 cups cooked Rice

Directions:

1. Season duckling with 1 tablespoon of Pat's Spice Blend and smoke in a conventional smoker.
2. Allow duck to cool, de-bone reserving meat, discarding fat and reserving bones for stock. Dice meat and set aside for later use.
3. Place smoked duck stock* in large saucepot and bring to boil. Add dark roux, lower heat and simmer for 30 minutes.
4. Add smoked andouille, onion, celery, bell pepper, garlic, remaining 2 tablespoons of Creole seasoning, Worcestershire, salt and hot sauce. Simmer for an additional 30 minutes.
5. Add diced smoked duck meat and simmer for 15 minutes.
6. Stir in green onions and parsley.
7. Divide cooked rice into 8 large bowls and ladle in gumbo.

Yields 8 servings.

*Smoked duck stock: Cover smoked duck bones with 1½ gallon of water. Add

end pieces from onion, celery and bell pepper and bring to boil. Lower fire and simmer for 1½ hours. Strain out solids and reserve stock. This can be done the day prior to cooking the gumbo. After stock is chilled, skim off the fat that rises to the top.

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