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Roast Goose a l'Orange

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Ingredients (Serves 8)
1 12-pound goose, thawed if frozen
1 teaspoon plus ½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground thyme
1 teaspoon paprika
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 large carrot, peeled and sliced
1 small onion, quartered
3 cups water
1 bay leaf
2 large navel oranges
½ cup sugar
¼ cup dry white wine
2 tablespoons cornstarch
Orange leaves or watercress, Orange blossoms (optional)

Two days ahead, prepare goose: In 8-quart or larger saucepot, heat 4 quarts water to boiling over high heat. Meanwhile, remove neck and giblets from goose. Rinse goose, neck, and giblets. Remove excess fat in body cavity; reserve for use in Step 2. Place goose on wire rack in sink. Ladle boiling water over the goose, turning on all sides. (Skin will shrink and whiten.) Place goose, breast side up, on rack in large, deep roasting pan. In cup, combine 1 teaspoon salt, the thyme, paprika, and pepper; sprinkle spice mixture inside the body and outside skin of the goose. Push legs under band of skin, if present, or tie together with string. Turn wing tips under neck skin in back. Refrigerate goose uncovered 1 or 2 days to dry its skin.

Meanwhile, prepare broth for sauce: In same saucepot, heat reserved goose fat until rendered. Discard all but 1 tablespoon fat. (Goose fat may be chilled and reserved for cooking or fed to wild birds.) In goose fat, sauté carrot, onion, neck and giblets until well browned. Add water and bay leaf; cover and heat to boiling over high heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer 1 hour to make broth for sauce. Strain broth; cool and refrigerate.

To roast goose, heat oven to 400 degrees F. Roast goose, uncovered, on lowest oven rack 1 hour. Meanwhile, with citrus "stripper" or vegetable peeler, remove just the orange part of skin of oranges in one continuous strip about ¼ inches wide. In 1-quart saucepan, heat orange strips with water to cover to boiling; drain. Repeat boiling 2 more times. Meanwhile, cut leftover oranges in half and ream or juice to extract ½ cup juice; set aside.

Remove accumulated goose fat from roasting pan. Lower oven temperature to 325 degrees F and continue roasting goose 2 to 2 ½ hours or until thigh registers 185 degrees F. (Remove accumulated fat from roasting pan at 30 minute intervals.) Transfer goose to platter; let stand 15 minutes before carving.

In 2-quart saucepan, heat sugar and orange juice to boiling. Add orange strips and boil 1 minute; transfer strips to plate and set juice mixture aside. In cup, combine wine and cornstarch until smooth. Stir 2 ½ cups goose broth, ½ teaspoon salt, and the cornstarch mixture into orange-juice mixture. Heat to boiling, stirring constantly, until thickened. Pour orange sauce into serving bowl and keep warm.

Garnish goose with orange strips; platter with leaves and blossoms. Carve goose and serve with sauce.

Additional Recipes: www.gooseproducts.com