

CHRISTMAS GOOSE

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- 1 goose (12 to 14), left at room temperature 1 hour before cooking
- 1 medium-size bulb (head) garlic, cut in half
- 1 small onion, cut in half
- 1 lemon or small orange, cut in half
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon *each* salt and pepper
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sweet red wine, such as port, sherry or marsala, or apple juice
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water
- 2 cups canned beef broth
- 1 cup pitted prunes, halved



1. Place oven rack in lowest position. Heat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Remove giblets, neck and any excess fat from around goose's body and neck cavities, cutting with a small sharp knife when necessary. Discard fat. Rinse bird inside and out with cool water. Taking care not to stab the flesh, pierce skin all over with a fork; this will help render fat from skin. Cut off wing tips and discard.
3. Put garlic, onion and lemon halves in body cavity. Tie ends of drumstick together to close cavity. Rub bird with salt and pepper. Place breast up directly in a roasting pan. Rinse neck; place next to goose.
4. Roast 30 minutes, then place roasting pan on stovetop. With a large spoon or a bulb baster, remove fat from pan to a 1-quart heatproof bowl or glass measuring cup; you will remove about 2 cups. Turn bird breast-side down; roast 30 minutes more, remove fat but *do not* turn bird over. (There should be a total of 4 cups removed fat; see Note.)
5. Reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees F. Roast goose about 1 ½ hours longer or until meat thermometer inserted into center of a thigh next to body (not touching bone) registers 185 degrees F.
6. Remove bird to a carving board; cover loosely with foil. Discard neck.
7. Pour pan drippings into a heatproof container and discard when cool. Place roasting pan on burner over medium heat. Add wine and stir with a wooden spoon, scraping up any browned bits. When mixture darkens and becomes syrupy, stir cornstarch into water until blended, then whisk into wine mixture. Boil 1 minute; whisk in broth and stir in prunes. Cook, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes or until fruit has plumped and sauce is slightly thickened.

Serves 8. Note. This fat is wonderful for frying potatoes (store it in the fridge). But go easy: It is fat, after all.