

DUCK RICE

ARROZ DE PATO

If there's one dish that defines the flavors of my childhood and of Aldea, this is it. And it all started with my mom. She prepares great Portuguese rice dishes and I wanted to pay respect to her and my ancestors by making a traditional dish my own for my restaurant. With this classic one-pot duck rice, I zoomed in on the ingredients, amplified their flavors, and presented it in a totally new way. I took my French training and deconstructed the duck: confited the legs to fold into rich calasparra rice toasted with refogado, made stock and jus from the bones to flavor the whole thing, cooked the breast sous-vide to arrange its rare slices on top, and fashioned crisp, savory cracklins from the skin as a finishing touch. I included chouriço and olives for good measure and made sure the rice developed its own crust too. It's simply wholesome and warming, but also complex with its satisfying depth of flavor and contrasting textures. It's the definition of refined rusticity.

SERVES 6 TO 8

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:

- > VACUUM SEALER
- > IMMERSION CIRCULATOR

DUCK CONFIT

- Long Island (Pekin) ducks 2 whole
(4 to 4½ pounds/1.8 to 2 kg each)
- fresh thyme 4 sprigs
- fresh rosemary 1 sprig
- fresh bay leaf 1, notches torn every ½ inch (12 mm)
- duck fat 3 cups (720 ml)
- kosher salt and freshly ground white pepper to taste
- white onion 1 cup (120 g) diced
- carrot 1, peeled and sliced
- celery stalk 1, sliced
- garlic cloves 3, sliced
- coriander seeds 1 tablespoon
- whole white peppercorns 1 tablespoon
- whole star anise 2

DUCK STOCK

- canola oil 2 tablespoons
- kosher salt as needed
- white onion 1 cup (120 g) chopped
- celery ½ cup (50 g) sliced
- carrot ½ cup (65 g) sliced
- tomato paste 1 tablespoon

DUCK JUS

- extra-virgin olive oil 2 tablespoons
- kosher salt as needed
- white onion ½, cut into 1-inch (2.5-cm) slices
- celery stalk 1, cut into ½-inch (12-mm) slices
- carrot ½, peeled and cut into ½-inch (12-mm) slices
- garlic cloves 3, crushed
- tomato paste 1 tablespoon

MAKE THE CONFIT: Cut off the duck legs and reserve. Cut the breast halves off the bones and reserve; remove the skins and use them to make Duck Skin Cracklins (page 112). Cut the carcass into 2-inch (5-cm) pieces and reserve, along with the necks.

Preheat the oven to 300°F (150°C). Wrap the thyme, rosemary, and bay leaf in cheesecloth, then tie securely into a sachet.

Heat a small roasting pan over medium-high heat and melt 1 tablespoon of the duck fat in it. Season the duck legs generously with salt and pepper, then add to the pan. Sear, turning occasionally, until golden brown. Transfer to a plate.

Add the onion, carrot, celery, garlic, and a pinch of salt to the pan. Sweat, stirring occasionally, until tender. Add the coriander, peppercorns, star anise, and herb sachet. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Add the remaining duck fat, melt, and bring to a slow bubble. Return the duck legs to the pan, submerging them in the mixture, and cover tightly with foil.

Bake until the meat falls off the bones, 6 to 8 hours. Remove the duck from the pan. When cool enough to handle, pull the meat off the bones in long ½-inch- (12-mm-) wide pieces. Discard the bones and cartilage. Strain the duck fat and reserve for future use. The duck legs can be stored in the fat for up to 5 days.

MAKE THE STOCK: Preheat the oven to 400°F (205°C) with a roasting pan inside.

Coat the hot pan with the oil and add half of the chopped duck carcasses and necks, turning to coat with the oil. Season with salt. Roast until golden brown, 20 to 30 minutes. Add the onion, celery, and carrot. Roast,

stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes, then cook for 15 minutes more. Stir in the tomato paste and roast for 2 minutes. Transfer the mixture to a 4-quart (3.8-L) saucepan. Deglaze the roasting pan with 1 cup (240 ml) water, stirring and scraping up the fond (the browned bits). Pour the water into the saucepan. Add more water to cover the solids by 2 inches (5 cm), at least 12 cups (2.8 L).

Bring to a simmer, then adjust the heat to maintain a slow bubble, uncovered, for 3 hours. Skim the scum that rises to the surface and discard. Press the stock through a fine-mesh sieve. Reserve 7 cups for the rice.

MAKE THE JUS: Preheat the oven to 400°F (205°C) with a roasting pan inside.

Coat the hot pan with the oil and add the remaining chopped duck carcasses and necks, turning to coat with the oil. Season with salt. Roast until golden brown, 20 to 30 minutes. Add the onion, celery, carrot, and garlic. Roast, stirring occasionally, until golden brown. Stir in the tomato paste and roast for 1 minute. Transfer the mixture to a rondeau (wide, shallow pot).

Add just enough duck stock to cover the solids. Bring to a boil, then simmer and reduce the stock until the solids are glazed. Repeat the process three times, adding just enough stock to cover the solids each time after the solids are glazed.

Add enough stock to cover the solids by 1 inch (2.5 cm), bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to maintain a slow simmer. Simmer for 2 hours, then press through a fine-mesh sieve. Transfer to a clean rondeau, bring to a simmer, and reduce until thick enough to coat the back of a spoon.

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DUCK RICE

kosher salt and freshly	
ground white pepper	to taste
duck fat	2 tablespoons
extra-virgin olive oil	¼ cup (60 ml), plus more as needed
Refogado (page 235)	¼ cup (60 ml)
calasparra rice	2 cups (13 ounces/364 g)
chouriço	8 ounces (224 g), casing removed, thinly sliced
pitted Kalamata olives	2 tablespoons, thinly sliced, ¼-inch (6-mm) slices
Duck Skin Cracklins (page 112)	1 recipe
Apricot Puree (page 242)	¼ cup (60 ml), or to taste

MAKE THE RICE: Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).

Season the duck breasts with salt and pepper. Place each portion in a sous-vide bag with ½ tablespoon of the duck fat and vacuum seal. Cook for 20 minutes in an immersion circulator set and held at 150°F (65°C). Remove the meat from the bags. You can sear the duck breasts to medium-rare, if you prefer.

Meanwhile, in a heavy 3-quart (2.8-L) rondeau, combine the oil and refogado. Set over medium-low heat and stir in the rice. Continue stirring until the rice is toasted and hot to the touch, about 2 minutes.

Add 6 cups (720 ml) duck stock. Cook, stirring constantly, until the rice has a harder bite than al dente and is still opaque in the center, 8 to 10 minutes. This step is key: Do not let the rice overcook. Transfer to a 14- to 16-inch (35.5- to 40.5-cm) paella pan.

Spread the rice in a flat layer, lightly tapping it with the back of a spoon. Scatter the chouriço, olives, and duck confit on top, then season with salt and pepper. Add 1 cup (240 ml) stock and transfer to the oven.

Bake until the rice is crisped around the edges of the pan and a soccarat crust of rice has formed on the bottom of the pan, about 7 minutes. The liquid should be completely absorbed and the rice an evenly transparent golden hue. Remove from the oven, tent with foil, and let stand for 5 minutes.

Divide the rice among eight serving plates. Slice the duck breasts and arrange on top. Drizzle with the jus. Break the cracklins into pieces and scatter them around the rice. Dollop the apricot puree on the sides of the dishes and serve.



DUCK SKIN CRACKLINS

These are the must-have garnish for the Duck Rice (page 108), but they also make an amazing snack.

SERVES 8

duck skins from 2 whole duck breasts
**kosher salt and freshly
ground white pepper** to taste

Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Line a half sheet pan with parchment paper.

Carefully scrape off and discard any excess fat from the duck skins. Arrange the duck skins in a single layer on the pan. Season with salt and pepper. Cover with a sheet of parchment paper. Place another half sheet pan on top, and place a cast-iron skillet or other heavy weight on the top pan.

Bake until the skins are golden brown and smell toasty, 10 to 12 minutes. Drain the skins on paper towels. Carefully drain, strain, and reserve the fat for future use. The fat can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 1 week.