

Duck: An Impressive And Easy Holiday Dish

(NAPSA)—If you want your holiday guests to say you have a gift for entertaining, try this tip: Keep the meals you serve varied, unique and interesting.

“Whether it’s for friends, family or a holiday occasion, the dinner you prepare always makes an impression,” says professional chef James Peterson. Peterson, author of “The Duck Cookbook,” recommends serving duckling instead of more common dishes made with chicken, turkey or beef. He says the meat is easy to prepare and guaranteed to give guests a pleasant surprise.

Try this recipe from the Duckling Council:

HONEY-THYME DUCK BREASTS WITH ROASTED ROOT VEGETABLES

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

- 1 head garlic
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 2 medium parsnips, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 4 small potatoes, halved
- 8 small shallots, unpeeled
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 8 sprigs thyme, divided
- Salt and black pepper
- 4 White Pekin duck breast halves (6 ounces each)
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- ½ cup chicken broth, homemade or low-sodium
- 1 teaspoon chopped thyme

Preheat oven to 425° F. Cut top off top third of garlic head; wrap garlic in aluminum foil. Bake about 45 minutes or until soft; cool and squeeze out pulp (there should be about 1 tablespoon). Set aside. In ovenproof baking dish, toss carrots, parsnips, potatoes and shallots with olive oil, 4 of the thyme



Honey-thyme duck breasts with roasted root vegetables is a delicious holiday dish that makes a statement.

sprigs and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Add about ½ cup water. Roast in 425° F about 1 hour or until vegetables are tender and lightly browned; set aside.

With sharp knife, score skin side of duck breasts in a series of parallel cuts ¾ inch apart, without cutting into meat. Make a second series of parallel cuts perpendicular to the first to form a cross-hatch pattern. Season breasts with salt and pepper. Place breasts skin side down in heavy nonstick skillet large enough to hold them comfortably in one layer; do not crowd. Cook over medium heat about 8 minutes or until fat runs out and skin is golden-brown and crisp. (Some breasts may brown more quickly than others; remove each breast as it is done.) Transfer breasts to baking dish or another skillet, skin side down, and finish cooking in oven about 8 minutes for rare, 10 minutes for medium-rare and 12 minutes for medium, turning

breasts onto flesh side after 6 minutes. Let breasts rest 3 to 4 minutes before slicing.

While breasts are in the oven, pour off fat from skillet breasts were browned in. Add honey and cook over medium heat, stirring, until honey turns golden-brown. Add vinegar; simmer until syrupy. Add broth, chopped thyme and garlic pulp; simmer, whisking occasionally, until sauce thickens slightly. Keep warm over low heat.

Divide vegetables equally among 4 plates, discarding thyme sprigs. Cut each breast crosswise on a slight angle into 4 to 5 slices about ½-inch thick; fan 1 breast on each plate around vegetables. Spoon sauce over breasts, dividing it equally. Garnish each plate with a thyme sprig. Makes 4 servings.

Nutrition Information Per Serving: 497 calories; 11 g fat; 131 mg cholesterol; 298 mg sodium; 61 g carbohydrate; 6 g fiber; 40 g protein.

For more information or recipes, visit www.duckling.org.