

Tagliatelle with Duck Ragù

BY FRANCO LUISE & ANTONIO VITALE GOURMET APRIL 2008

The secret to making this dish so stunningly delicious is duck fat. Puréeing the sauce emulsifies the fat, which, along with the moist duck meat, adds an irreplaceable element of richness.

YIELD: Makes 4 servings **ACTIVE TIME:** 30 min **TOTAL TIME:** 1 3/4 hr

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 (1-pound) boneless Muscovy duck breast with skin or 2 (7- to 8-ounce) Long Island (also called Pekin) duck breast halves with skin
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, smashed
- 1 teaspoon chopped rosemary
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 2 cups rich chicken stock or reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 (14- to 15-ounce) can whole tomatoes in juice, drained, reserving juice, and chopped
- 1/2 pound dried egg tagliatelle or egg fettuccine

PREPARATION

Heat butter and oil in a deep 10-inch heavy skillet over medium heat until foam subsides.

Meanwhile, pat duck dry and sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon each of salt and pepper.

Sear duck, skin side down, until golden brown and some of fat has rendered, about 6 minutes. Turn over and cook until browned, about 2 minutes more. Transfer duck to a plate, then add onion to fat in skillet with garlic, rosemary, and 1/8 teaspoon salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is softened and golden brown, about 6 minutes. Add wine and boil 3 minutes.

Return duck, skin side up, to skillet, then add any juices from plate, stock, and tomatoes with their juice. Bring to a boil, then gently simmer, covered, 1 hour.

Transfer duck to a cutting board, then skim off about three fourths of fat from sauce and discard.

Purée sauce in batches in a blender (use caution when blending hot liquids). Return sauce to skillet and boil, stirring occasionally, until reduced to about 2 1/2 cups, about 8 minutes.

While sauce reduces, finely chop duck with skin.

Return chopped duck to sauce and season with salt and pepper.

Cook tagliatelle in a pasta pot of boiling salted water (3 tablespoons salt for 6 quarts water) until al dente, then drain pasta and toss with duck *ragú*.

Cooks' note:

Duck ragú; can be made 1 day ahead and chilled, covered (once cool).