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WATERFOWL COOKING CARE



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Waterfowl — Cooking Care

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Duck and goose hunting is a popular fall recreational activity in Texas. Several steps should be taken immediately after the kill, as well as when you arrive home, to insure top cooking quality. For the best flavor and eye appeal, the hunter needs to know how to field dress, cool, transport, age, pluck and prepare the fowl for eating.

Proper Field Care

Duck and goose should be dressed immediately. Proper field care prevents spoilage and off flavors.

Many duck and goose hunters recommend that the bird be bled to improve flavor. This can be done by cutting the throat immediately after shooting. Birds should be dressed completely as soon as possible.

Remove the entrails by cutting a slit just below the breastbone, down to and around the vent. Remove all the contents. Avoid breaking the gall bladder sac on the liver. Bile from the gall bladder will destroy the meat flavor. Save the gizzard, heart and liver for eating purposes. Place giblets in a plastic bag. Cut near the base of the neck and remove the craw.

Wipe the body cavity clean with a moist cloth. Moisture spreads bacteria which cause spoilage. Most hunters remove the two oil glands found on the upper surface of the tail, or the entire tail structure.

Cool the bird by allowing air to circulate in the body cavity. A small stick inserted in the cavity will help hold it open to speed cooling. Place the birds in a cooler if the outdoor temperature is not cold.

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Aging Duck and Goose

Aging waterfowl will remove much of the gamey flavor and help develop tenderness. To age an unplucked bird, hang at a temperature of 40° to 45° F. for 3 to 4 days. A fully dressed bird can be aged more safely by refrigeration at 35° to 40° F. for 3 to 4 days.

Removing Feathers

Although skinning ducks and geese may be easier than plucking, moisture and flavor will be improved by plucking the feathers and leaving the skin intact. Remove the wings at the joint nearest the body. Cut off the feet at the first joint above the feet. Remove the head and most of the neck. Most hunters prefer to pick ducks and geese dry rather than wet. The fingers of the picker can be moistened occasionally to facilitate plucking. The thumb and index finger are used to pick feathers while the bird is held firmly with the other hand. After "rough picking," the down feathers can be removed by "skidding" or rubbing across the bird firmly with the thumb. Use a knife blade and your thumb as a stop to pull pinfeathers. The bird can be singed over a flame to remove down.

Another method of removing feathers is to partially dry pluck and dip in paraffin or duck wax (available at most sporting goods stores). Then dip the bird into cold water to quickly solidify the wax. Repeat the dipping process until the bird is covered with a heavy coating of set wax. Then use a table knife or sturdy spoon to peel off slabs and strips of wax. The remaining feathers and down on the bird will stick in the wax and come off with it.

If skinning is preferred, use bacon strips across the bird during cooking to add moisture.

Storage

Freeze duck and goose immediately after packaging. Keep the meat at 0° F. or lower until it is used. Quality meat, correctly wrapped in moisture-vapor-proof freezing paper, will keep frozen at this temperature from 9 or 10 months to a year. The heart and liver should be used within 6 months. Thaw frozen fowl by placing the package in the refrigerator for 12 to 18 hours. This slow thawing will tenderize the meat.

Waterfowl provides variety and contributes high quality nutrients to meals of families of Texas sportsmen. Utilization of wild fowl killed in a hunt aids conservation of a valuable resource and can be a food budget stretcher.

How Waterfowl Fits into the Basic Four Food Groups

Meat Group

Duck and goose fit into the meat group of the basic four food groups. Like domestic fowl, wild waterfowl is rich in protein, minerals and vitamins. Meat of wild duck is drier and darker than that of domestic duck. Goose meat is rich, dark and lean. These waterfowl can furnish the two servings of meat needed daily. Serving size is 2 to 3 ounces of lean meat.

Protein furnished by waterfowl is needed for growth and repair of body tissues, muscles, blood, skin and hair. These foods also provide phosphorus for strong bones; iron for helping cells carry oxygen; riboflavin and thiamine as part of enzymes to help release energy from food; niacin for healthy nerves; and fats for energy.

Part of the serving of meat group foods may come from other foods included in this group such as poultry, eggs, fish or shellfish, or meat alternates — dry beans, dry peas, nuts, peanuts or peanut butter.

Vegetable-Fruit Group

Choose four or more servings from the fruit and vegetable group daily. Include one serving rich in vitamin C. Also include one serving at least every other day of a good source of vitamin A. If the food chosen for vitamin C is also a good source of vitamin A, the additional serving of vitamin A food may be omitted.

The remaining one to three or more servings may be of any vegetable or fruit including those that are valuable for vitamins C and A.

Count $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables or fruit as one serving, or a portion as ordinarily served — one medium apple, banana, orange or potato; half a medium grapefruit or cantaloupe; or the juice of one lemon.

Good sources of vitamin C include oranges, grapefruit, strawberries, broccoli and green pepper. Fair sources of vitamin C include lemon, raw cabbage, greens, tomatoes, and potatoes in the jacket.

Good sources of vitamin A include dark green and deep yellow vegetables such as broccoli, carrots, greens, pumpkin and winter squash.

Milk Group

Include milk, cheese or ice cream in the daily meals. Milk is the leading source of calcium needed for bones and teeth. It also provides high quality protein, riboflavin, vitamin A and many other nutrients.

Recommended amounts of whole fluid milk are: Children under 9 years of age — two to three cups (8-ounce cups); children 9 to 12 — three or more cups; teenagers — four or more cups; adults — two or more cups; pregnant women — three or more cups.

Part or all of the milk may be skim milk, buttermilk, evaporated milk or dry milk.

Cheese and ice cream may replace part of the milk. The amount is based on calcium equivalents in milk: 1-inch cube of cheddar-type cheese = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk; $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cottage cheese = $\frac{1}{3}$ cup milk; 2 tablespoons of cream cheese = 1 tablespoon milk; and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of ice cream = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk.

Bread-Cereal Group

Choose four or more servings daily from the bread-cereal group. This group includes all breads and cereals that are whole grain or enriched. If no cereals are chosen, have an extra serving of bread or baked goods.

Count as one serving: 1 slice bread; 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal; $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cooked cereal, cornmeal, grits, macaroni, noodles, rice or spaghetti.

Some of the foods in this group include breads, cooked cereals, ready-to-eat cereals, cornmeal, crackers, flour, grits, macaroni and spaghetti, noodles, rice, rolled oats, quick breads and other baked goods if they are made from whole grain or enriched flour.

Foods in this group furnish worthwhile amounts of protein, iron, several of the B vitamins and food energy.

Other Foods

To round out meals and meet energy needs, almost everyone will use some foods not specified in the four food groups. Such foods include unenriched, refined breads, cereals and flours; sugar; butter, margarine and other fats. These often are ingredients in recipes or are added to other food during preparation at the table.

Try to include some vegetable oil among the fats used.

Include Waterfowl in Meals PLanned According to Basic Four Food Groups

Dishes that are quick and easy to prepare are popular for camp cooking during the hunt. A favorite is braised duck cooked in a Dutch oven while sportsmen are hunting. Ducks and geese can also be fried in an iron skillet while camping.

Exotic waterfowl dishes are popular and can be prepared at home. Serve roasted duck with velvet sauce for a festive occasion. Your guests will savor the delicacy of this food.

Suggested Menus with Waterfowl

The following menus suggest various ways to use waterfowl in a day's meals planned to include the recommended servings of foods from the basic four food groups.

On the Hunt

	Meat Group	Milk Group	Vegetable- Fruit Group	Bread- Cereal Group	Other
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Breakfast

Fresh Orange			X		
Canned Corned Beef Hash	X				
Poached Egg	X				
Toast — 2 slices				XX	
Hot Chocolate		X			

Lunch

Fried Goose	X				
Vegetable Soup			X		
Corn Relish			X		
Crackers				X	
Milk		X			

Supper

Braised Duck	X				
Baked Potato			X		
Green Beans			X		
Cranberry Sauce			X		
Bread				X	
Milk		X			

At Home

Breakfast

Cantaloupe			X		
Dry Cereal				X	
Ham Slice	X				
Milk		X			
Coffee					X

Lunch

Roast Goose	X				
Creole Sauce			X		
Rice				X	
Green Salad			X		
Warm Apple Crisp			X		
French Bread				X	
Milk		X			

Supper

Roast Wild Duck with Velvet Sauce	X				
Broccoli			X		
New Potatoes			X		
Hot Rolls				X	
Angel Food Cake				X	
Milk		X			

Preparation and Recipes

Fish-eating ducks (those with pointed and serrated bills) should be marinated in vinegar, wine or buttermilk. Older duck and goose may be marinated in a solution of $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt and 1 tablespoon vinegar per quart of cold water for 4 to 12 hours in the refrigerator to improve flavor and tenderness.

Duck meat is at its best when served rare. If well-done meat is desired, additional cooking time should be given, taking care not to overcook and toughen the birds. Meat of wild duck is dark and drier than domestic meat. Roasting with strips of bacon or in a covered roaster helps retain moisture and reduce dryness of less tender and larger ducks. In roasting or broiling ducks, use a rack to keep them free of their own fat and do not baste with the fat.

Young geese are a delicacy and very little of their meat is wasted. The meat is rich, dark and lean. Old birds are tough and not easily tenderized by cooking with moist heat. They are identifiable by few pinfeathers, coarse plumage and extremely large wingspurs.

Ducks and geese may be baked, barbequed, breaded, broiled, fried or combined in casseroles, chop suey, creoles, gumbos and gravies.

Duck

CANTONESE DUCK

2 ducks, 2 to 2½ pounds (dressed weight)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup prepared mustard
Garlic, salt and pepper	2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 lemon, halved	1 cup apricot preserves
4 sprigs parsley	1 tablespoon lemon juice
6 slices bacon	1 teaspoon grated orange peel
	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup melted butter

Sprinkle ducks inside and out with salt and pepper. Place 2 sprigs of parsley and $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon in cavity of each. Cover breast with bacon and fasten with string. For Cantonese sauce, combine mustard and remaining ingredients (except butter) and heat in double boiler over hot water. Place ducks, breast up, in a baking pan. Roast in preheated oven at 350° F., 30 to 45 minutes per pound, basting frequently with butter and once with Cantonese sauce. Carve ducks and serve with rice and remaining Cantonese sauce. Serves four.

ROAST WILD DUCK WITH VELVET SAUCE

2 ducklings (5 to 6 pounds each)	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup chili sauce
Onion and garlic salts	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup soy sauce
4 oranges, halved crosswise	1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter or margarine	1 teaspoon ginger
1 medium onion, chopped	2 teaspoons prepared mustard
17-ounce can purple plums	2 drops hot sauce
16-ounce can frozen lemonade concentrate	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup orange liqueur (optional)

Quarter the ducklings and sprinkle with onion and garlic salts. Set each piece on an orange half, on a trivet in a roasting pan. Roast at 350° F. for 1½ hours. While ducklings roast, melt butter in large skillet, add onion and simmer until tender. Meanwhile, empty the can of plums (including juice) into a strainer which has been placed over a bowl. Pit and puree the plums. Add puree to onion and blend in frozen lemonade, chili sauce, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, ginger, mustard and hot sauce. Simmer for 15 minutes. After the ducklings have roasted for 1½ hours, remove ducks, oranges and trivet from roasting pan. Drain off excess fat. Arrange duckling quarters and oranges, side by side, in pan and brush with plum sauce and return to oven. Baste frequently with sauce for the next 30 minutes. Add orange liqueur to remaining sauce and baste frequently for the last 25 minutes of baking time. Duck quarters should be well glazed. Serve with remaining sauce. Serves eight.

BRAISED DUCK

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|---|--|
| 1 duck (4 to 5 pounds) cut in serving pieces or quartered | 2 small onions, peeled, stuck with 2 cloves each |
| Flour | 1½ teaspoons salt |
| 2 tablespoons vegetable oil | 3 peppercorns, crushed |
| 2 cups water | 3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley |
| 1½ cups dry white wine | ½ teaspoon rosemary, crushed |
| 1 bay leaf | |

Coat duck pieces with flour. Heat oil in a Dutch oven and brown the pieces on all sides. Drain off any excess fat and oil. Add all remaining ingredients. Cover and simmer until tender — about 1½ hours (or bake at 350° F.). Drain and serve. Serves four.

ROAST WILD DUCK

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|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 3-to 5-pound duck | 1 small onion, sliced |
| Salt and pepper | Wine or orange juice |
| 1 medium apple, sliced | |

Season duck inside and out with salt and pepper. Put onion and apple into cavity of duck. Place on rack of roasting pan. Do not cover. (Cover older birds for the last half of the cooking time.) Do not add water. Cook at 325° F. for 2 to 3 hours or until tender. Baste occasionally with wine or orange juice. Remove apple and onion before serving. Serves six.

Sauces for Roast Duck

Spanish or Creole Sauce

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2 tablespoons chopped onion | ¼ cup chopped cooked ham or bacon |
| 2 tablespoons fat | Chopped parsley |
| 1 tablespoon flour | Salt and pepper to taste |
| 2 cups cooked tomatoes | Chili pepper, if desired |
| ½ cup chopped celery | 1 green pepper, minced |

Cook the onion in the fat for a few minutes. Sprinkle the flour over the onion and quickly stir in the tomatoes, celery and green pepper. Simmer for about 20 minutes. Add the ham or bacon, parsley, salt and pepper and serve at once.



Duck Barbecue Sauce

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|---|-------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 2 | tablespoons chili sauce | 1 | teaspoon salt |
| 1 | tablespoon lemon juice | 1 | teaspoon Worcestershire sauce |
| 1 | teaspoon hot sauce | | |

Blend well. Baste duck with sauce while baking.

Dressing for Wild Duck

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 3 | cups bread cubes, toasted | 1 | teaspoon ground sage |
| ½ | cup melted fat | 2 | tablespoons minced onion |
| ¼ | teaspoon pepper | 1 | teaspoon salt |
- Milk to moisten

Mix ingredients well. Add milk if mixture seems dry.

Variations:

1. Moisten dressing with melted butter and hot water instead of milk. Cut slits in breast of duck and insert slices of bacon in slits.
2. Arrange slices of bacon and apple on duck; then roast.
3. Blend together grated rind and chopped sections of one orange and one cup of cooked rice. This amount will stuff one duck.
4. For a tasty dressing combine 4 cups bread cubes, 1 teaspoon sage, 2 tablespoons butter, 1 minced onion, ½ cup chopped celery, ½ cup raisins and 1 tablespoon sugar.
5. Spread currant jelly over roasted duck when it is removed from oven.
6. Add beaten eggs, milk and chopped parsley to bread crumbs for a duck stuffing.

Goose

STUFFED WILD GOOSE

- | | | | |
|----|--|--------|----------------------------|
| 1 | young goose, 6 to 8 pounds,
ready-to-cook | 1 | cup chopped dried apricots |
| | Juice of 1 lemon | 3 | cups soft bread crumbs |
| | Salt and pepper | ½ | teaspoon salt |
| ¼ | cup butter or margarine | ½ | teaspoon pepper |
| ¼ | cup chopped onion | 4 to 6 | slices bacon |
| 1. | cup chopped tart apple | | Melted bacon fat |

Sprinkle goose inside and out with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Melt butter or margarine in a large saucepan. Add onion and cook until tender. Stir in apple, apricots, bread crumbs, salt and pepper. Spoon stuffing lightly into cavity. Truss bird. Cover breast with bacon slices and cheesecloth soaked in melted bacon fat. Place goose, breast up, on rack in roasting pan. Roast at 325° F. for 20 to 25 minutes per pound or until tender, basting frequently with bacon fat and drippings in pan. If age of goose is uncertain, pour 1 cup of water into pan and cover during the last hour of cooking. Remove cheesecloth, skewers and string. Serves six to eight.

ROASTED GOOSE

- 1 goose, 6 to 8 pounds
1 apple, sliced

- 2 teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoon pepper

Fill the goose with sliced apples. Truss bird. Cover breast with bacon slices and cheesecloth soaked in bacon fat. Place goose, breast up, on rack in roasting pan. Roast at 325° F. for 20 to 25 minutes per pound or until tender, basting frequently with drippings in pan. Serves six to eight.

GOOSE IN A BAG

- 1 tablespoon flour
1 cup dry, red wine
1 goose (about 6 pounds dressed)

- Salt
2 tablespoons whole celery seed
2 teaspoons whole celery seed (to sprinkle outside body cavity)

Preheat oven to 350° F. Shake 1 tablespoon flour within a large size (14-×20-inch) oven cooking bag and place in a 2-inch deep roasting pan. Pour wine into bag and stir with flour until well mixed. Remove excess fat from inside goose, rinse and pat dry. Season cavity and outside with salt. Place 2 tablespoons whole celery seed inside the body cavity and sprinkle 2 teaspoons whole celery seed on the outside of the goose. Place goose within the bag and close bag with twist-tie. Make six ½-inch slits in top of bag. Cook for 2 hours (adjust cooking time for larger or smaller bird). Remove goose to serving platter and pour gravy from bag into small saucepan. Skim off grease, bring gravy to a boil and serve with the goose.

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