

FLORENCE FABRICANT

*The* LADIES' VILLAGE  
IMPROVEMENT  
SOCIETY COOKBOOK

*Eating and Entertaining in East Hampton*

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It takes a long memory to identify the French chef who came to America to head his country's culinary team at the 1939 World's Fair in New York. Then World War II started and it was impossible for the group of French chefs to return home. So Soulé remained and opened a restaurant called Le Pavillon.

Decades ago New York's French restaurants kept the tradition of closing for vacation in July or August and sometimes both. But rather than hang up his toque for the season, Soulé went east and became the chef at the Hedges Inn, a historic house at Town Pond. His recipe for duck à l'orange made with a whole duck appeared in the *LVIS Centennial Cookbook*. Here it's simplified, using only duck breasts, which are now readily available, and updated with the addition of miso as a thickener for the sauce.

**SERVES 6**

**IMPROVEMENT:** The sauce can be used with other meats, including roast pork, veal, chicken, or quail.

# Duck à l'Orange

**HENRI SOULÉ**

2 ORANGES

2 TABLESPOONS SUGAR

½ CUP DUCK STOCK OR CHICKEN STOCK, WARMED

1 TABLESPOON RED MISO

2 BONELESS DUCK BREASTS (MAGRETS DE CANARD)

SALT AND FRESHLY GROUND BLACK PEPPER

¼ CUP COINTREAU

Cut the zest from the oranges in long, narrow strips and set aside. Cut off the pith down to the flesh and discard it. Remove the orange segments, cutting them out over a bowl to catch the juice, and reserve them. Place the zest in a small saucepan. Cover with water and simmer for 2 minutes. Strain and reserve the zest.

Place the sugar in a medium skillet with the juice from the oranges. Bring to a simmer over medium heat and cook until the mixture turns a light caramel, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and add the stock, but step back as you do so because the mixture may spatter. Stir to combine. Stir in the miso and the cooked orange zest and set aside.

Preheat the oven to 175 F.

Score the fat on the duck breasts in a crisscross pattern without cutting into the flesh. Season the duck on both sides with salt and pepper. Heat a cast iron skillet large enough to hold the duck on high heat. Place the duck breasts skin side down in the pan and sear just until the skin is beautifully bronzed, about 3 minutes. Turn the duck and place the pan in the oven for 1½ hours. The result will be medium rare.

When the duck is done, remove it to a cutting board. Reheat the sauce over medium low heat. Add the Cointreau and the reserved orange segments. Add a couple of spoonfuls of the duck fat and any duck juices from the cast iron skillet. Season the sauce with salt and pepper.

Slice the duck breasts across the grain about ½ inch thick. Arrange on a platter. Spoon the sauce over the duck and serve.