



Roots

Farm to Table Recipes from the Black Swan,
a Restaurant in the English Countryside

TOMMY BANKS



RIZZOLI
NEW YORK



Quail Roasted with Herbs, Green Sauce, and Chestnut Mushrooms

3 / SERVES 4

4 free-range quails
4¼ cups sweet pink brine (page 274),
flavored with garlic, rosemary,
and thyme
vegetable oil
1 small garlic bulb, halved horizontally
½ cup red wine
4¼ cups chicken stock
2 small bunches thyme
7 tablespoons butter
3 garlic cloves, lightly crushed
2–3 rosemary sprigs
12 chestnut mushrooms, sliced
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon chopped chervil
1 teaspoon chopped chives
1 small summer truffle

For the herb sauce:

3 teaspoons chicken glaze (page 275)
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon
white wine vinegar
3 teaspoons Dijon mustard
½ cup green herb oil (page 134),
made with roughly 40% parsley, 40%
chives, and 20% tarragon

Quail is a beautiful bird to roast and, unlike its larger cousins, it cooks quickly. Like all poultry, quail loves being paired with herbs, which makes this a perfect alfresco lunch on a warm summer's day.

Cut out the wishbones from the quails and slice through the backs to give you 4 crowns and 4 intact pairs of legs. Place the crowns in a deep plastic container, cover with the brine, and place in the fridge overnight. Store the legs in the fridge.

The next day, preheat the oven to 350°F. For the sauce, lightly oil the legs and place them in a roasting pan. Add the garlic halves, cut side down, and roast for about 30–40 minutes until the legs are browned and the garlic is sweet and soft. Bring the wine to a boil in a saucepan and reduce until syrupy, then add the stock, quail legs, garlic halves, and 1 thyme bunch. Bring to a boil, then turn down and simmer for about 1 hour, skimming the surface frequently. Pass the stock through a muslin cloth into a clean pan, bring to a boil again and then reduce at a steady simmer until you have a rich, sticky sauce. The sauce can be made in advance, refrigerated, and then reheated to serve.

To make the herb sauce, warm the chicken glaze in a small saucepan until completely melted, then whisk in the vinegar and mustard until combined. Remove from the heat. Place the pan on a folded damp cloth to keep it stable, and blend with a handheld blender with one hand while gradually pouring in the herb oil with the other. When the oil is all used up you should have a very thick and glossy green emulsion. Place in a piping bag and set aside somewhere moderately warm.

Remove the quail crowns from the brine and pat dry with a clean kitchen towel. Heat about 2 tablespoons of oil in a heavy-bottomed frying pan over medium-high heat and brown the crowns all over, turning frequently and propping the crowns against one another in various positions to brown the trickier areas.

Add the butter, crushed garlic cloves, rosemary, and remaining thyme bunch, and allow the butter to foam. Turn down the heat and baste the crowns in the foaming butter from every direction for about 5 minutes, including inside the cavities by propping them against the edge of the pan on their neck ends. This will ensure that the meat is not totally raw near the breast bone. Remove the crowns from the pan (do not discard the butter or wash the pan yet), cover loosely with foil, and leave to rest in a warm place for 10 minutes.

Remove the garlic and herbs from the quail pan, turn up the heat, and add the mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper and sauté for a couple of minutes until they start to turn golden. Pour away roughly half of the butter, add about 2 tablespoons of water to emulsify the rest, and remove the pan from the heat. Stir in the chervil and chives and place two piles of the mushroom mixture on each of four warmed serving plates. Carve the quail breasts from the crowns and place them on the piles of mushrooms. Drizzle with the warmed quail sauce and pipe dots of the herb sauce around the plate. Grate over the truffle and serve immediately.