

Crispy Roast Duck

2 kg/4 lb duckling (may substitute chicken, if desired)
3 tarragon sprigs
250 g/8 oz kumquats
1 tbsp orange juice
3 tbsp sherry
1 tbsp clear honey
salt and pepper
green beans, to serve

Dry the duckling thoroughly inside and out, then season the cavity with salt and pepper. Tuck the tarragon sprigs and 4 of the kumquats inside the duckling, then place it on a rack over a roasting pan. With a needle, prick the duckling in several places to release the fat during cooking. Rub the skin with salt and roast in the center of a preheated oven, 375 degrees F, for 1 ½ hours or until the skin is crisp and golden. A few minutes before the duckling is cooked, cut the remaining kumquats lengthways in half and place in a pan with the orange juice, sherry, and honey. Bring to the boil and simmer for 2 minutes, stirring constantly. To serve, carve the duckling into quarters, place on a warmed serving dish, spoon over the kumquats and serve with the green beans.

Variation: Duck with Orange and Brandy Sauce

Cook the duckling as above, but without the kumquats. Meanwhile, thinly pare the rind from 2 oranges and cut into thin strips. Cover with cold water and cook for 8-10 minutes, until tender. Drain and reserve 150 ml/1/4 pint of the cooking liquid. Squeeze the juice from 3 oranges and 1 lemon and make up to 300 ml/1/2 pint with beef stock. Remove the duckling from the roasting pan and skim off the fat. Sprinkle in 1 tbsp of flour and cook for 2 minutes, stirring. Gradually stir in the reserved orange liquid, the stock mixture and 150 ml/1/4 pint white wine and bring to the boil. Add 2 tbsp of honey, and season. Simmer until the sauce is reduced by one-quarter. Return the duckling to the roasting pan, pour over 4 tbsp brandy and ignite. Baste with the sauce then transfer to a serving dish and sprinkle with half the orange strips. Pour the sauce into a warm sauceboat and stir in the remaining orange strips.