

Pan-fried duck breast with bigarade sauce and wilted watercress

For the bigarade sauce

1 lemon
3 oranges
45g/1¾oz light brown sugar
3 tbsp red wine vinegar
300g/10½oz duck wings
rapeseed oil, for frying
700ml/1pt 5fl oz chicken or duck stock
salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the duck

2 Gressingham duck breasts
salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 large carrot, peeled, diced
3 celery stalks, trimmed, diced
1 onion, peeled and chopped
2 garlic cloves, peeled and grated
rapeseed oil, for frying
250g/9oz watercress

For the bigarade sauce, heat a splash of rapeseed oil in a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the duck wings and fry until browned all over.

Meanwhile, zest the lemon and two of the oranges and set aside.

Squeeze the juice from the lemon and all of the oranges into a bowl and set aside.

Heat the sugar and wine vinegar in a deep-sided, non-reactive frying pan over a low heat until the sugar has dissolved.

Increase the heat slightly and continue to cook the sugar until it forms a deep golden-brown caramel.

As soon as the vinegar syrup has formed a caramel, add the lemon and orange juice mixture and the browned duck wings.

Continue to cook the caramel for 3-4 minutes, shaking the pan from time to time to prevent the duck wings sticking to the bottom and to coat them in the caramel.

Pour in the stock and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer gently for 40-45 minutes, or until the sauce is thick enough to lightly coat the back of a spoon. Skim any froth that rises to the surface from time to time during cooking.

Heat another splash of oil in a separate frying pan; add the watercress and cook until wilted, stirring well. Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Just before serving, strain the bigarade sauce through a fine sieve into a clean pan and season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Add the reserved, blanched lemon and orange zests to the bigarade sauce and stir well.

To serve, arrange some of the wilted watercress into the centre of each of four serving plates. Place the cooked breasts on top of each portion of watercress. Drizzle over the bigarade sauce.