

Pigeon “Woodcock” Style

(Prepare the day of)

Prepare the pigeons: gingerly remove all the feathers. Gut them and put aside the livers, hearts and gizzards. Salt and pepper, wrap the pigeons in a strip of lard, and then truss them.

Cook them on all sides until golden brown before placing them in a casserole to finish cooking at a moderate temperature.

Giblet paste for the toasts:

Carefully clean the giblets (remove the internal skin from the gizzards), finely chop them along with a few cubes of cured Bayonne ham. Salt and pepper. Sauté a shallot in butter, add the mince, cook it all together then add one generous shot of Armagnac or Cognac and three of Madeira. Add a rounded teaspoon of whole-grain mustard, a few grains of juniper and a ladle of the red-wine game stock. Let simmer gently on the stove. Spread thick slices of good country bread with butter and toast them, and when ready to serve spread a generous dose of paste on each one.

Sauce:

Sauté a shallot with some diced cured Bayonne ham and a generous slice of foie gras cut into cubes. Pour a large cup of red-wine game stock, add a few grains of juniper, one teaspoon of whole-grain mustard, 3 shots of Madeira and 1 of Armagnac or Cognac, a bouquet-garni, a few grains of juniper and a pinch of “Piment d'Espelette” pepper powder. Let simmer for 1 hour, and mix after removing the bouquet-garni. Adjust the salt and pepper and drizzle the pigeons previously placed on the toasts.