

Rocco DiSpirito Gives The Dish On White Pekin Duckling

(NAPS)—Enjoying his recent fame as “America’s Most Exciting Young Chef” (*Gourmet* magazine) and special guest on *The Late Show with David Letterman*, Rocco DiSpirito has been doing a lot of talking lately. And now, he is talking up White Pekin duckling. As chef spokesperson for The Duckling Council, DiSpirito has a lot to say on the merits of White Pekin duckling.

Duckling has been a part of his repertoire since day one of his culinary training and an “adored” selection on his menu at the acclaimed Manhattan-based Union Pacific restaurant.

By incorporating global ingredients and ethnic flavors to give his cooking a style of its own, DiSpirito describes his style of cuisine as “contemporary American cuisine”—contemporary with a solid foundation of French classic cooking. Using the four receptors of the palate, salt, sweet, sour and bitter, DiSpirito is able to create unique, signature flavor combinations by selecting ingredients that bring those sensations to life. “I take a lot of cues from Indian and South American cuisine—providing tension on the palate,” said DiSpirito.

White Pekin duckling complements this style with its unique flavor and versatility. DiSpirito finds the flavor of White Pekin very mild, allowing him to be creative when combining duckling with other ingredients. “White Pekin is one of the most tender duckling breeds available. I pair it with a variety of spices and fruits to create savory dishes,” said DiSpirito.

Duck Breast And Fig Salad With A Red Wine Vinaigrette

5 White Pekin duck breasts,
boned and halved
¼ cup red wine vinegar
¼ cup red wine
1 cup olive oil
1 fresh bay leaf
1 sprig of fresh thyme
2 teaspoons shallots, minced
salt and pepper to taste
5 fresh figs (or pears) cut in
half
1 pound arugula
¼ pound chestnuts, blanched



Preheat oven at 350°.

Trim duck breasts if necessary. Place in pan. In a separate bowl, mix ½ of the red wine vinegar, red wine, olive oil, bay leaf, thyme and shallots. Season with salt and pepper. Pour on duck and marinate for 30 minutes.

Trim top portion of the stem on figs. Season with pepper. Place in pan and add remaining red wine vinegar and red wine. Hold aside. Heat up grill. Grill duck until cooked to desired doneness. Brush with marinade while grilling. Reserve leftover marinade and heat on stove until just a boil. Continue to boil for 1 minute. Hold aside. Take duck off grill and let rest. Place figs on grill to warm, skin side down.

Slice duck on the bias. Divide arugula in to 5 portions and put on plate. Place duck and figs on top. Sprinkle with blanched chestnuts. Drizzle cooked marinade over duck, figs and greens.

Yield: 5 servings.

For more duckling recipes, visit www.duckling.org.