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Chef Tom Colicchio



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MARPRO028



SMALL CASSOULET KIT



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YOU ARE ABOUT TO DISCOVER THE MAGIC OF CASSOULET

In Southwest France, every village makes a variation of this iconic bean and meat stew, and each believes their interpretation is the only true cassoulet. The D'Artagnan Cassoulet Recipe Kit has nearly everything you need to make a traditional cassoulet for four people. Rich with preserved duck and pork, our recipe strictly follows the version perfected in the village of our founder, Ariane Daguin, and includes the heirloom Tarbais beans preferred there.

BEFORE YOU START COOKING

You'll find cassoulet is simple to cook, but it requires a little patience. Take your time. Enjoy every morsel. Happy cooking!

INGREDIENTS

In Your Kit:

- 1 package French Tarbais Beans, rinsed and picked over
- 1 piece Ventrèche
- 1/4 cup Duck Fat, at room temperature, plus more as needed
- 3 Duck Leg Confit, cut in half at the joint
- 1 container Duck and Veal Demi-Glace
- 1 package Duck and Armagnac Sausage
- 1 link French Garlic Sausage

Additional Ingredients:

- water, as needed
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
- 1 small onion, peeled and cut in half
- 3 whole cloves
- 1 medium carrot, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- Coarse salt & freshly cracked black pepper
- 1 bouquet garni, made of 5 parsley sprigs, 1 thyme sprig, 1 bay leaf and about 10 peppercorns, wrapped in cheesecloth and tied

PREPARATION

1. Place the beans in a large non-reactive container and cover with cool water by several inches. Leave them to soak at room temperature for 24 hours, checking the water level every so often as the beans will absorb quite a bit of water.

2. Drain the beans then add them to a large, heavy pot. Remove the plastic sleeve from the ventrèche, slice in half, and place 1 half on top of the beans (reserve the 2nd half for another use) along with the garlic, carrot, and bouquet garni. Press the pointed end of each clove into the outside of the onion and add to pot. Add enough cool water to cover the mixture by at least 3 inches. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat then reduce heat to low and simmer, uncovered, until the beans are barely tender, about 1 hour.

3. While the beans are cooking, prepare the meats. In a medium skillet over medium-high flame, brown the duck & Armagnac sausages. Remove to a cutting board and cut each link into thirds; set aside. Cut the garlic sausage into 2 halves (reserve one half for another use). Cut remaining half lengthwise and then into 1/4" slices. Set aside. Cut each duck leg in half at the joint; set aside.

4. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.

5. When the beans are cooked, remove the bouquet garni and the onion; discard. Remove the ventrèche to a cutting board to cool. Drain the bean mixture, discarding liquid. Season the beans with about 1/2 teaspoon of salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste. Slice the cooled ventrèche into 1/4" chunks, set aside.

6. In a large measuring cup with a pour spout, whisk together demi-glace, tomato paste, and 1 1/4 cups of water. Set aside.

7. Grease the bottom and sides of a 4-quart enameled cast-iron pot, or earthenware cassole, with about a tablespoon of duck fat. Spread half of the bean mixture in an even layer. Place the duck legs, browned duck sausages, chopped ventrèche, and sliced garlic sausage in an even layer over the beans; drizzle with about a tablespoon of duck fat. Cover with remaining beans. Pour the demi-glace mixture evenly over the cassoulet then drizzle about 2 tablespoons of duck fat over the top.

8. Bake uncovered until beans are very tender and cassoulet is hot and bubbling, about 2 1/2 - 3 hours, checking occasionally to make certain the beans are not drying out. The texture should be similar to a thick stew. If it seems too dry or pasty, add some liquid, such as stock, demi-glace or even water. Typically, you'll have to cut the crust and add liquid at least once before it's hot all the way through

NOTE: Cassoulet may be prepared ahead up to this point, then cooled and refrigerated up to 3 days. Remove from the refrigerator and bring up to room temperature before proceeding.

9. Increase oven to 400 degrees F. Continue to cook cassoulet until the top is nicely browned and a crust has formed, about 45 minutes. If at this point, cassoulet is not heated through, cut open the crust, and pour in an additional 1/2 cup of water, and continue to cook until hot all the way through.

10. Serve immediately. Each guest should get an equal proportion of beans to meats.

TIPS

Cassoulet can be a complete meal but a crisp green salad dressed with a light vinaigrette makes a nice accompaniment and tempers the richness.

For the extra ventrèche: Use as you would any pancetta. Dice and sauté or slice thinly and crisp before adding to pastas, salads, quiches, pizzas, or casseroles. Or use as a base for braises or stews.

For the extra garlic sausage: Garlic sausage is fully cooked. Slice for a snack or for a charcuterie board. Dice and add to soups, salads, omelets, and pastas.