

As Good as it Gets

Chef Jacques Haeringer's delectable wild duck breast salad. By Skip Knowles

AN AVID HUNTER, wild game expert and frequent "Today" show guest, award-winning Chef Jacques Haeringer's philosophy is that good food, good friends, a relaxing environment and tastes to be savored are as good as life gets. For years, he has been spreading that message to the thousands

of patrons that flock to his family's idyllic restaurant in suburban Washington, DC, as well as to the viewers of his syndicated television show and readers of his cookbooks. As Chef de Cuisine of the legendary L'Auberge Chez François restaurant, Jacques is one of America's most respected and

innovative culinary personalities. He can also be found teaching gourmet cooking classes, writing articles, and appearing at cooking demonstrations and on television and radio shows. For more information on Chef Jacques, his books and cooking classes, visit him online at www.ChefJacques.com.



WILD DUCK BREAST SALAD

INGREDIENTS:

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| 1 duck (larger ducks are better) | 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil |
| 1 tablespoon butter | freshly ground pepper |
| sea salt | 1/2 cup vinaigrette |
| 2 cups frisé or mesclun salad | 8 cucumber slices |
| 6 cherry tomatoes | |



TO PREPARE THE DUCK: Debone the bird by placing it breast up with the cavity facing you. Grasp the left thigh, pull it away from the carcass, and then cut down through the joint to separate it. Turn the duck so the neck faces you and remove the other thigh. Remove the breast by running the knife along one side of the breastbone and scraping the meat off along the rib cage. Cut through and detach the wing joint at the shoulder. Repeat on the other side. Finally, cut away the wing joint attached to each breast, leaving two duck "steaks." Lightly salt and pepper and reserve. The legs are tough and are usually stewed.

additional 1½ minutes for medium rare, depending on the thickness of the duck breasts. Increase the cooking time to suit individual taste. Remove from the pan and allow to rest for 5 minutes.

TO COMPOSE THE SALAD: Add the vinaigrette to the prepared greens and toss.

Divide the greens, cherry tomatoes, and cucumber slices between two serving plates.

Cut the cooked duck breasts into thin diagonal slices and arrange the slices on the plates next to the greens. Serve immediately.

VARIATION: Quail eggs and foie gras make terrific garnishes; that is how Jacques serves it at L'Auberge Chez François restaurant (see photo).

EXTRAS: Jacques often uses the duck bones and legs to make a duck stock or soup.



This recipe is from *Two for Tonight: Pure Romance from L'Auberge Chez François* by Jacques E. Haeringer, available at www.laubergechezfrancois.com