

From the
Left Bank
kitchen

CASSOULET

Cassoulet is a rich, slow-cooked casserole originating in the south of France, containing meat, pork, and white beans. The dish is named after its traditional cooking vessel.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 lbs lingot or white beans
- 1 small peeled carrot
- 1 cloved onion
- 1 lb slab bacon
- 1 bouquet garni

- 1 duck leg confit per person (you can either buy it or make it, see recipe below)

- 2 lbs pork butt cut in 2"x2" cubes
- 1/4 cup duck fat
- 10c small diced onions
- 4 cups garlic
- 1/4 c tomato paste
- 1 small can diced tomatoes in purée
- 6 each Toulouse sausages
- 1 small garlic sausage

- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1 tsp garlic
- 1 tbs parsley
- 1/4 tsp chopped fresh thyme
- 1/4 tbs extra virgin olive oil

DUCK CONFIT: The night before, Chef David rubs the duck legs with his version of "green salt" (Kosher salt, parsley, a couple bay leaves, and thyme ground together). Next day, rinse them well, pat dry, and cook in duck fat (must be covered in fat) in a tightly sealed container in the oven at 225 degrees for about 2.5 to 3 hrs.

DIRECTIONS:

The night before, soak the beans, making sure to rinse them well the next day. Add rinsed beans, carrots, onions, bacon, and bouquet garni to cold water and cook until the beans are tender. Strain, saving the water, and set aside the beans.

Heat up duck fat. Add pork on high heat and let it cook for a bit without stirring. After a while, start stirring, making sure you scrape bottom if it starts to caramelize. The pork doesn't need a lot of color, but needs to cook in the duck fat for a while. Add lots of salt and pepper. This is not a shy dish.

When pork is seared on all sides and well on the way, remaining on high heat, add the onions and stir, then add garlic and stir. The onions will give you liquid and vapor to keep the pot from burning.

Add tomato paste when the onions are cooked. Continue to let it cook away. Add some liquid from the beans. Add can diced tomato. Stir and clean the side of the pot with spatula.

When it comes to a boil, turn it down and add all the sausages. When they are cooked, remove and set aside. Cut garlic sausage in half and slice it. Combine the sausages with the beans and let the pork cook more on low heat till it's cooked through.

When ready, combine the pork with the beans and sausage. Taste your seasoning.

Cook in the oven at 225 degrees for about 1.5 hours, checking at least every 30 minutes. It may require a bit more time.

In the meantime, combine the panko, garlic, parsley, thyme, and extra virgin olive oil.

When about to serve, add hot duck legs and top with breadcrumb mixture. Let the crumbs brown on the top and enjoy!