

Mixed Wild Fowl

Hedi Klinger has worked behind the stoves of Gasthof Klinger in Upper Austria for decades, and she's won countless accolades for her down-to-earth cooking. Feathered game is a great choice during autumn and winter, and individual birds served to each diner can be a nice touch. Pheasants feed two people, while partridges and squab feed one. Game birds have a lovely earthy flavor, and pigeons provide toothsome, dense, dark meat. Roasting smaller birds allows you to sample different flavors.

Courtesy Hedi Klinger, chef/owner, Gasthof Klinger, Grieskirchen, Austria

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 medium shallot, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley
- 3 ounces diced stale white bread, crusts removed
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 pheasant
- 2 partridges
- 2 squabs
- 2 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon finely ground white pepper
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh marjoram
- 16 pieces thin-cut bacon
- 1–2 cups chicken stock

Heat oven to 350°F.

To make stuffing, melt 1 tablespoon of butter in skillet over low heat. Add shallot, and cook until soft, but not browned. Add parsley at end of cooking, and let sit. Combine bread and spices in large bowl, and add shallot-parsley mixture. In small bowl, mix egg with milk, and combine with bread. Sprinkle flour on top. Let sit several minutes, then mix fully.

Wash birds inside and out, and pat dry with paper towels. Season cavities with salt, pepper and marjoram. Add stuffing mixture to birds. (Don't overfill, as stuffing expands during cooking.) Season outside of birds with salt and pepper, and rub butter on breasts and legs. Drape bacon over birds. Truss legs and secure bacon loosely with string.

Put pheasant into oven first, breast-side up. It will need approximately 1 hour to cook. The smaller birds can be added after 20–30 minutes. Cook, basting occasionally, until all birds and stuffing register an internal temperature of 165°F. Remove bacon from birds, and keep warm. Let birds rest on warmed serving platter.

Move roasting pan to stove. Deglaze with a bit of chicken stock. Bring to boil, and reduce slightly. Add remaining 1 tablespoon butter, and strain into gravy boat. Serve on one large plate, or on individual plates with bacon crumbled atop. *Serves 8.*

Pair It

These little bird roasts, with their gamey flavors, billowy stuffing and salty bacon, need a medium-bodied red that can stand up to, but not overpower, them. A traditional Austrian selection, like **Muhr-Van der Niepoort's 2014 Samt & Seide Blaufränkisch**, and a New World counterpart, like **Brick House's 2014 Gamay Noir from Oregon**, both show lovely cherry fruit, a spicy touch of pepper and lip-smacking freshness that will illuminate all of the flavors without weighing them down.

Wild Fowl Side Dishes

Basic roasted potatoes are a staple at Gasthof Klinger and add a pleasantly starchy, toasty element to this richly flavored spread.

Red cabbage spiced with cinnamon and nutmeg and cooked with apples and orange juice offers warm, fruity notes to counter the boldly flavored birds.

Wild fowl are
available at
dartagnan.com



BRICK HOUSE