

## Duck Confit

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This is a fine meal in its own right (simply reheat the duck legs) but it is also the starting point for a classic French *Cassoulet*.

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### Planning

serves:	4
prep time:	
cooking time:	

### Ingredients

2 bay leaves, destalked  
2 teaspoons dried thyme  
5 tablespoons sea salt  
4 duck legs  
1 clove of garlic, chopped  
500g duck fat or lard

### Method

Put the bay leaves in a coffee grinder with the thyme and blitz to a powder. Scatter half the salt in a dish. Rub the garlic all over the duck and lay it, skin-side down, on top of the salt. Scatter the herb mixture evenly over the duck, then sprinkle over the remaining salt. Refrigerate for 12 hours, then turn the duck over and return to the fridge for a further 12 hours. The salt will have liquified.

Rinse the duck in cold water and pat dry. On the stove top, gently melt the fat in a pan in which the duck pieces just fit comfortably. When hot, add the duck, which must be covered with fat; if it is not, add lard until it is fully covered. When just trembling but not boiling, keep it this way and cook for 1 hour. Push in a skewer at the thickest point; it should slide in easily. If not, check again after 10 minutes.

Transfer the confit to a plastic container or sterilized preserving jar. Ladle the fat over the confit through a fine sieve, being careful not to ladle any of the juices from the bottom of the cooking dish. Allow to cool completely then seal with a lid and refrigerate for a good couple of weeks (to allow the flavour to develop) until needed.

You can now set about making a wonderful *Cassoulet*.

Alternatively, you could use the Duck Confit in its own right. Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6. To serve, remove the duck from the fat and place on a baking tray for 1 hour to come to room temperature. Pour off any melted fat from the tray and roast, skin-side down, for 20 minutes, turning it skin-side up to serve.

Melt the stored fat from the container and bring to the boil before straining back through a sieve into a bowl to keep in the fridge to use for another confit. It can be used 3 times before it becomes too salty.