

cranberries

Cranberry-Ancho Chile Breast of Duck

(serves 4)

1	dried ancho chile	1/2	cup	orange juice	
1	cup	boiling water	1	Tbsp	balsamic vinegar
1	clove	garlic	1/2	cup	chicken stock
1/2	cup	cranberry cocktail	2	cups	cranberries, fresh or frozen
2	Tbsp	unsalted butter	4 1/2	lb	duck breasts
3	Tbsp	sugar			salt & pepper
1/2	cup	dry white wine	1	Tbsp	butter

In a small skillet, char the chile over med-high heat for 40 seconds. Remove from pan and put into a heat proof bowl. Pour the boiling water over and soak for 20 minutes until softened. Drain and remove the core and seeds from the chile and coarsely chop. In a blender or processor, puree the chile with the garlic and the cranberry cocktail until smooth.

Melt 2 T. of butter in a heavy saucepan over medium heat, add the sugar. Cook until the sugar has melted to a deep golden caramel (about 7 min.). Very carefully (it will splatter) pour the wine, orange juice and vinegar down the side of the pan. Whisk in the chile puree and bring to a boil. Add the chicken stock and 1 and 1/2 cups of the cranberries (reserve the other 1/2 cup for later). Boil until the sauce thickens, about 35 min. Remove from heat and strain the sauce through a fine sieve. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Preheat the oven to 425°F.

Score the skin of the duck breasts with a sharp knife in a diamond pattern. Season with salt and pepper. Melt 1 T. of butter in a large heavy skillet over med. Heat. Place the duck in the pan skin side down. Cook the breasts until well browned, about 10 min., pouring off excess fat as it accumulates. Turn over and cook for another 3 min. Transfer the skillet to the oven and roast until the breasts register 170°F. on a meat thermometer. Remove from pan to serving platter. Keep warm.

Pour off all but 2 T. fat from the pan. Add the cranberry-ancho chile sauce and remaining 1/2 cup of cranberries. Cook over med. heat, scraping up any brown bits for about 5 min. Whisk in 1 T. butter.

Slice the duck breasts on the diagonal and pour the sauce over. Serve immediately.

Note: The sauce is equally good with veal, pork or lamb chops and chicken breasts.

