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Cooking South Dakota Pheasant

South Dakota is the hunter's paradise, and the ring-necked pheasant is the king of its game birds. In order that you may better enjoy the results of your hunting in South Dakota, a project was undertaken by several state agencies to standardize pheasant recipes and to create variations in preparing pheasant dishes.

FIELD CARE OF PHEASANTS

It is good practice to field dress the birds as soon as feasible after they are shot. Normally, birds may be kept a few hours before removing the entrails, but if a bird is quite shot up, the flavor of the meat is affected. Also, it is desirable to separate the birds to allow them to lose their body temperature as quickly as possible. Field dressing birds hastens the cooling process. Many hunters skin the birds rather than pluck them. However, others feel that flavor is lost when the birds are skinned.

PHEASANT COOKERY

When cooking older birds, it is best to add small amounts of moisture at a time, and use a covered container during part of the cooking period. This is not necessary for young birds. In general, the age of the bird may be readily determined by the spurs. The spurs, although present on a young bird, are neither long nor sharp; on an older bird, they are both long and sharp.

Allow one pheasant for two people. A larger bird may serve at least three people.



Barbecued Pheasant

- 1 young pheasant, cut in pieces
- $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. pepper
- Melted butter
- Your favorite Barbecue Sauce

Use breast, thighs and legs. With a sharp knife, cut meat from each side of keel or breast bone, making 2 breast pieces. Sprinkle pheasant pieces with salt and pepper. Brush well with melted butter or other fat. Line bottom of broiling pan with foil. Flatten pheasant pieces on foil. Do not use a rack. Broil with surface of meat 7-9 inches from the heat. Broil slowly. Regulate pan position so that browning begins after 10-15 minutes. Turn occasionally and baste with your favorite barbecue sauce. Keep the browning even. Broil until fork tender—approximately 30-40 minutes.

Cooking South Dakota Pheasant

Cooperative Extension Service



Roast Pheasant

- 1 young pheasant
- Salt
- 8 slices salt pork or bacon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. oil

Rub cavity of pheasant with salt. Smoked salt may be used with bacon slices if desired. Shape or plump bird. Stuff with favorite dressing if desired. Completely cover breast and all meaty portions with strips of salt pork or bacon. Tie in place. Place bird breast side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Pour $\frac{1}{4}$ c. oil over bird. Roast in 400° F. oven. Do not cover. Baste with oil if necessary, and turn if necessary for even browning. Roasting time about 50 to 60 minutes depending upon size of bird and degree of doneness desired. Pheasant need not be well done. Too long a cooking period should be avoided. If dressing has been used, avoid letting it stand in bird cavity for any period of time after meat is cooked.

This method has been developed for birds that have been skinned, as many pheasants are dressed this way. The high oven temperature and continuous basting from the salt pork or bacon slices helps to keep the meat juicy.

By Rena Willis, Associate Professor of Home Economics (This Fact Sheet is a cooperative project of the Food and Nutrition Department, Home Economics Division, and Entomology-Zoology Department, South Dakota State College, and South Dakota Department Game, Fish and Parks.)

Roast Pheasant With Cabbage

- 1 young pheasant
- ½ c. chopped onion
- ½ c. chopped cabbage
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ⅛ tsp. pepper
- 2 Tbsp. milk
- 1 slice bread, cubed or ½ c. bread crumbs
- 8 strips bacon

Combine onion, cabbage, lightly beaten egg, seasonings, bread cubes and milk to make a wet dressing. Stuff cavity of bird with dressing. Shape or plump bird, use round toothpicks for skewers, and lace with string to close openings. Completely cover breast and all meaty portions of bird with strips of bacon. Tie in place. Place bird breast side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Roast in a 400°F. oven until tender, about 50-60 minutes. Avoid letting dressing stand in bird cavity for any period of time after meat is cooked.



Roast Pheasant With Horseradish Sauce

- 1 young pheasant
- 4 slices bacon
- 1 Tbsp. horseradish
- ⅔ c. cream
- Salt

Rub cavity of bird with salt. Shape or plump bird. Place bird breast side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Cover breast of bird with strips of bacon. Roast uncovered in a 350°F. oven for approximately 1 hour. Stir cream and horseradish together and pour over bird. Stir horseradish sauce into pan juices and baste bird frequently. Continue roasting for 15 minutes longer. Serve sauce with pheasant.



Pheasant in Cream

- 1 pheasant, cut in pieces
- 1 tsp. monosodium glutamate
- ¼ c. flour
- ¾ tsp. salt
- ⅛ tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. paprika
- ¼ to ½ c. sour (or sweet) cream
- ¼ c. cooking fat
- 1 3½ oz. can mushrooms (optional)
- 2 Tbsp. chopped onion (optional)

Mix seasonings with flour. Dredge pieces of pheasant in seasoned flour, and, if convenient, allow them to dry on a rack approximately ½ hour. Heat ¼ inch layer of cooking fat in skillet to 340°-360°F., or until a drop of water just sizzles. Brown the pheasant pieces evenly and slowly in the heated fat. Avoid crowding the pieces in the skillet and turn them as necessary, using a kitchen tongs to avoid piercing the coating.

Allow 15 to 20 minutes for browning. Remove browned pieces from the skillet and place one layer deep in a shallow casserole. If desired, add mushrooms and chopped onion which has been browned in the fat in the skillet. Drizzle 1 to 2 tablespoons of sour or sweet cream (or 1 Tbsp. butter and 1 Tbsp. milk) over each of the browned pheasant pieces in the casserole.

Bake in a 325°F. oven 45-60 minutes or until fork tender. Do not cover young bird. An older bird may be baked covered until tender, then uncovered for 15 to 20 minutes to re crisp. If needed, turn once or twice during cooking so that the pieces cook and crisp evenly. Add more cream if the meat gets dry.

Variations:

1. When pheasant pieces are evenly browned, reduce heat in skillet (about 220°F.). Cover and cook until fork tender (20-40 minutes). Add small portions of liquid at a time, and turn as necessary for uniform cooking.
Uncover last 10-15 minutes to re crisp. If desired, prepare gravy with pan drippings.
2. Sprinkle dehydrated onion soup generously over browned meat instead of using fresh chopped onion.

A popular method for preparing pheasant, this recipe may be used for older birds, and the young birds, too.

Parmesan Pheasant

- 1 pheasant, cut in pieces
- 1 tsp. monosodium glutamate
- ¼ c. flour
- ¾ tsp. salt
- ⅙ tsp. pepper
- 2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ tsp. paprika
- ¼ c. butter
- ½ c. stock (may dissolve 1 chicken bouillon cube in ½ c. hot water)

Mix seasonings with flour. Roll pheasant pieces in mixture. If possible, place coated pieces on a rack to dry about ½ hour. Brown slowly in butter in skillet (340°-360°F.). Allow about 15 minutes on each side.

When golden brown, add stock or hot water in which bouillon cube has been dissolved. Cover. Simmer about 20 minutes or until tender. Uncover and cook about 10 minutes longer to re crisp.

May be used for either a young or an older bird. The Parmesan cheese is the flavor-key.



Casserole of Pheasant and Broccoli

- 1 10-oz. package frozen broccoli pieces
- 2 c. sliced or cubed cooked pheasant
- ¼ c. chopped pimento
- 1 can condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped onion
- ¼ c. grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ tsp. curry powder
- 2 drops tobasco sauce
- paprika

Cook broccoli according to directions on package except limit cooking time to 5 minutes. Drain thoroughly and arrange in the bottom of a shallow casserole. Arrange pheasant slices or cubes over broccoli, scatter the pimento over this. Combine soup and seasonings except the paprika and a little of the cheese.

Pour this sauce over the pheasant mixture. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and with paprika. Bake at 350° F. for 20 minutes. Serves 4.

This casserole dish is an excellent way to use leftover cooked pheasant.

Deep Fat Fried Pheasant

- 1 young pheasant, cut in pieces
- ¼ c. coating mixture*
- milk or buttermilk
- cooking fat

Cut meat from each side of keel or breast bone with a sharp knife, making 2 breast pieces. Marinate pheasant pieces in milk or buttermilk 1 to 2 hours in the refrigerator, or dip in milk. Dredge pieces in desired coating.* Dry on rack approximately one-half hour. Transfer a few coated pieces at a time to deep fat frying basket and lower into heated fat (350°-360° F.). Use 2 inches or more of heated fat. Remove pieces when golden brown (3-5 minutes). Serve immediately, or if you are preparing a large quantity of pheasant, keep already fried pieces hot in a single layer in a flat casserole in a 300°F. oven.

*Coating mixtures:

(1) Mix:

- ¼ c. flour
- 1 tsp. paprika
- ¾ tsp. salt
- ⅙ tsp. pepper

(2) ¼ c. pancake mix

- ¼ tsp. salt

(3) Mix:

- ¼ c. flour
- ¾ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 1/16 tsp. oregano
- 1/16 tsp. basil

(4) Combine ingredients and beat with a rotary beater until batter is smooth.

- 1 egg, beaten slightly
- ½ c. milk
- ½ c. flour
- ½ to 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- ⅙ tsp. allspice
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ⅙ tsp. pepper

Pheasant Steaks

1 young pheasant
¼ c. flour
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper
1/16 tsp. oregano
1/16 tsp. basil
¼ c. butter

Use breast and thighs only. With a sharp knife, cut meat from each side of breast bone, making 2 steaks. Split thigh to remove bone. Pound steaks to even thickness. Mix salt, pepper, oregano and basil with flour. (Variation: substitute 1 tsp. paprika for basil and oregano.) Brown steaks slowly in butter or other shortening (340°-360°F.). Turn when golden brown. To test doneness, cut a gash in center of steak with a sharp knife. Steaks should still be juicy, without evidence of pink color. Cooking time will be about 3-5 minutes. Serve immediately. If desired, sprinkle with a little lemon juice just before serving.

Braised Pheasant With Mushrooms

1 pheasant, cut in pieces
¼ c. pancake mix
¼ c. butter
1 c. mushrooms
3 Tbsp. chopped onion
½ c. stock (may use 1 chicken bouillon cube dissolved in ½ c. hot water)
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
½ tsp. salt
½ tsp. black pepper

Dredge cut up pieces of pheasant in pancake mix. Brown pieces in butter until golden brown (approximately 10 minutes). Remove pheasant pieces. In the butter remaining in skillet, saute mushrooms and chopped onion until golden brown (approximately 10 minutes). Return meat to skillet, add stock, lemon juice and seasonings. Cover and simmer 1 hour or until tender. Remove cover last 10 to 15 minutes of cooking time to re crisp meat.

This is an excellent method for older birds, and is suitable for young birds, too.

Pheasant Baked in Onion Rings

1 young pheasant, cut in pieces
¼ c. pancake mix
1 large or 2 medium onions
¼ c. melted butter
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
Salt
Pepper

Roll pieces of pheasant in pancake mix (or seasoned flour). Arrange dredged pieces in a single layer in a greased shallow casserole. Slice onions and blanket pheasant pieces with onion rings. Cover with melted butter. Sprinkle with lemon juice, salt, pepper, and Worcestershire sauce. Bake in 375°F. oven until tender—about 1 hour. If more browning is desired, use 450°F. oven last 10-15 minutes and turn pieces as necessary.