



game-to-eat





## introduction

### Game for it...

Food lovers will be spoilt for choice this Autumn with the wide variety of game available from the beginning of the new game season, in particular pheasant, partridge and venison. Look out for the exciting range of convenient cuts now available to ensure that you can use game in all types of dishes from spaghetti bolognaise using venison mince, to curries using pheasant breasts.

Pop down to your local butcher and ask for specific cuts or try your local supermarket for the best ready-to-eat options. More and more supermarkets will be stocking game this season, so look out for the growing range of ready-meal options, ideal for a quick mid-week supper.

Wild, natural and free range, game is a great choice for people who want something delicious and healthy in their diet. It is lower in fat and cholesterol than many other red meats and is a good source of protein and vitamins.

The Game-to-Eat campaign, now in its sixth year, is dedicated to increasing our enjoyment of game. This year's selection of recipes includes a twist on old favourites, for example Venison Lasagne, plus delicious new mouth-watering dishes such as Warm Pheasant Salad with wild mushroom dressing and Partridge with Moroccan Spices and roasted root vegetables.



## Tasty and Healthy

Whether you choose to cook pheasant, venison or partridge the wonderful flavour of wild game really gets the taste buds going - and there's the added bonus that you are making a healthy choice. Game meat is a healthy alternative to red meat.

Game-to-Eat has commissioned scientific research into the benefits of game meat consumption. The results confirm that pheasant and partridge are particularly high in protein and low in fat, cholesterol and sodium, making them a healthy food choice. Both also contain high levels of iron, Vitamin B(6) and selenium. Selenium is an important part of our diet that we often lack and helps protect cells from damage caused by free radicals.

Venison is high in protein, low in fat and has fewer calories than other red meats. Venison is particularly low in saturated fatty acids and contains higher iron levels than other meats.

\* Research was carried out by  
Leatherhead Food International Research



## Warm pheasant salad with wild mushroom dressing



Serves 4

- 4 tbsp olive oil • 4 pheasant breast fillets • 2 whole unpeeled garlic cloves
- 200g wild mushrooms (morel, chanterelle) • 4 tbsp dry white wine
- 2 tbsp finely chopped red onion • 1 tbsp roughly chopped soft fresh thyme
- 1 (135g) bag watercress, spinach and rocket salad
- 2 nectarines, stoned and sliced

### Method

- 1 Pour 1 tbsp oil into a large heavy based frying pan, add the whole garlic cloves then set the pan over a medium heat. When the oil is hot fry the pheasant breasts for 2-3 minutes each side until lightly browned and just cooked through. Transfer them to a board, leave to rest for a few minutes, then slice.
- 2 Heat the remaining oil to the pan, add the mushrooms and fry for 1-2 minutes. Pour in the wine and allow to bubble rapidly for a second or two. Remove from the heat. Add the red onion and thyme. Season.
- 3 To serve, divide the salad leaves and nectarines between four plates. Top with the pheasant breasts, then spoon over the warm mushrooms and the dressing.

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## Sautéed partridge breast fillets with rosemary and apples



Serves 4

- 4 small sprigs of rosemary • 8 partridge breast fillets • 2-3 tbsp olive oil
- 25g butter • 2 red skinned apples eg. Gala, cored and thickly sliced
- 3 small red onions, peeled and sliced into slim wedges
- 50ml dry white wine • mashed potatoes to serve

### Method

- 1 Strip the leaves from 2 sprigs of rosemary and press them onto the partridge breast fillets. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Heat the oil in a large heavy based frying pan and fry them for 2-3 minutes each side until just cooked through.
- 2 Remove from the pan, keep warm. Melt the butter in the pan, add the apples, red onions and remaining thyme. Fry for 5-6 minutes until softened and lightly browned.
- 3 Pour in the wine and stir to scrape up any juices stuck to the bottom of the pan, boil to reduce slightly. Arrange the partridge breast fillets, apples and onions on warmed plates with the pan juices spooned over the top. Serve with mashed potatoes.

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## Venison lasagne



Serves 4

- 1 tbsp olive oil • 1 onion, peeled and chopped • 1 carrot, peeled and chopped
- 2 sticks celery, chopped • 450g minced venison • 300ml beef or venison stock
- 150ml red wine • 400g can chopped tomatoes • 1 tbsp sundried tomato paste
- 470g jar lasagne white sauce • 100ml crème fraiche • 65g mature Cheddar cheese, finely grated
- 9-12 dried lasagne sheets • 5 tbsp freshly grated Parmesan cheese • green salad to serve

### Method

- 1 Heat the oil in a heavy based pan. Add the onion, carrot and celery. Fry gently for 5 minutes or until beginning to soften. Add the venison, turn up the heat and cook for a further 2-3 minutes, stirring to break up the lumps, until lightly browned.
- 2 Add the stock, wine, canned tomatoes, tomato paste. Stir well, bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 40 minutes until the meat is tender and the sauce is thickened and reduced. Season.
- 3 Mix together the white sauce, crème fraiche and Cheddar cheese.
- 4 Preheat the oven to 170C/380F/Gas Mark 5. Lightly oil an oblong ovenproof dish. Spread about one third of the sauce over the base. Cover with 3-4 lasagne sheets, trying not to overlap them too much. Spread with about one third of the white sauce and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Then add a layer of meat sauce, spreading evenly.
- 5 Repeat the layers twice more, finishing with the sauce and Parmesan cheese. Bake for 30-35 minutes until browned and bubbling around the edges. Serve with a tossed green salad.

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## Pheasant breasts braised in cider



Serves 4

- 4 pheasant breast fillets • 4 rashers, rindless smoked back bacon
- 300ml dry cider • 4 shallots, peeled and finely chopped • 25g butter
- 1 tsp caster sugar • 1 tbsp plain flour • 4 tbsp full fat crème fraîche
- roast potatoes and baby leeks to serve

### Method

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas Mark 6. Season the pheasant breast fillets with freshly ground black pepper and wrap each one with a rasher of bacon. Place in an ovenproof dish so they aren't too cramped together, pour 5 tbsp cider over the top. Bake for 15-20 minutes until tender.
- 2 Heat the butter in a pan until melted and foaming. Add the shallots, fry gently until soft. Sprinkle in the caster sugar and continue to cook, stirring until slightly caramelised.
- 3 Stir in the flour. When combined pour in the remaining cider and the crème fraîche. Heat and simmer until the sauce has reduced and slightly thickened. Season to taste. Thickly slice the pheasant breasts and transfer to warmed plates. Spoon the sauce over the top. Serve with roast potatoes and baby leeks.

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## Partridge with Moroccan spices and roasted root vegetables



Serves 6

• 1 tsp ground cinnamon • ½ tsp ground ginger • ¼ tsp ground nutmeg  
• 3 tbsp olive oil • 6 partridges **Roast Vegetables:** 500g small red skinned potatoes, halved • 3 carrots, peeled and thickly sliced • 3 small parsnips, peeled and quartered • 3 tbsp olive oil • 1 tsp honey • 1 tsp cumin seeds, crushed • pinch of saffron strands, crushed **Dressing:** 25g raisins • 25g dried apricots, quartered • 100ml olive oil • 4 tbsp lemon juice • 2 tbsp roughly chopped leaf parsley • 50g blanched almonds, toasted and roughly chopped

### Method

- 1 Mix together the cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg. Brush a little olive oil over each partridge and rub with the spice mixture. Place on a covered plate and leave in the fridge for about an hour to absorb the flavours.
- 2 For the roast vegetables: Preheat the oven to 180C/400F/Gas Mark 6. Place the potatoes in a large roasting tray with the carrots and parsnips. Mix together the olive oil, honey and spices, pour over the top, toss together. Roast for 25 minutes.
- 3 Meanwhile, soak the raisins and apricots in boiling water for 5 minutes, then drain. Whisk the lemon juice and oil together. Add the raisins, apricot, parsley and almonds. Season.
- 4 Stir and turn the vegetables. Transfer the partridges to a baking tray and roast along side them for a further 15 minutes or until tender. Serve on warmed plates with the dressing spooned over the vegetables.





## Venison Stir Fry



Serves 4

- 400g venison steaks • 4 tbsp soy sauce • 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 baby pak choi, leaves separated • 200g bean sprouts • 2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed • ½ inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and finely grated
- 1 small crushed dried red chilli • 1 (400g) packet ready cooked noodles
- 4 spring onions, finely sliced • 50g roasted peanuts, chopped

### Method

- 1 Thinly slice the venison steaks, across the grain. Place in a bowl with the soy sauce. Stir well. Set aside to marinate for 30 minutes.
- 2 Heat 1 tbsp oil in a wok or large heavy based frying pan. Add the venison and stir fry for 2-3 mins until just cooked through. Transfer to a plate with a slotted spoon.
- 3 Add the remaining oil to the pan. Add the pak choi, beansprouts, garlic, ginger and chilli. Stir fry for 2-3 mins. Return the venison to the pan with the noodles and spring onions. Toss together for 2-3 minutes until heated through. Scatter with the peanuts and serve.

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## hints and tips

- **DELICIOUS ROAST PARTRIDGE:** put a pat of seasoned butter in the bird's cavity and cover the breast with bacon. Cook in a very hot oven at 220C/425F/gas 7 for 30 mins, removing the bacon for the last 10 mins to brown. Baste frequently. Serve with a thin gravy, bread sauce and seasonal vegetables.
- **TRADITIONAL ROAST PHEASANT:** season the bird inside and out. Put a piece of apple, cored and skinned, or half a small onion inside the bird together with a knob of butter. Rub the outside of the bird with more butter and cover the breast with bacon. Roast at 190C/375F/Gas 5 for 45 minutes, basting regularly. Remove the bacon for the final 10 minutes to brown the breast. Make a thin gravy with the roasting juices and serve.
- **VENISON:** the secret for delicious tender and juicy venison is not to overcook it and to rest the meat for at least 10 minutes before carving or serving. This has an amazing effect on the texture and flavour. Always cook your venison until rare or pink to ensure maximum flavour and tenderness.
- **QUANTITIES:** when cooking game allow one game bird per person, apart from pheasant and mallard duck, which should serve two.
- **COOKING TIMES ARE ONLY A GUIDE,** remember they can vary according to the type of oven you are using and the size or age of the game to be cooked, also personal taste.



## game seasons

Game can only be shot during specific times of the year and a basic guide to the shooting seasons is given below. However, increasingly frozen game meat is available year round.

<b>Grouse:</b>	12th August (Glorious Twelfth) to 10th December
<b>Pheasant:</b>	1st October to 1st February
<b>Partridge:</b>	1st September to 1st February
<b>Duck and Goose:</b>	1st September to 31st January
<b>Hare:</b>	1st August to 29th February
<b>Red Deer Stags:</b>	1st August to 30th April (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) 1st July to 20th October (Scotland)
<b>Red Deer Hinds:</b>	1st November to 31st March (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) 21st October to 15th February (Scotland)
<b>Sika Deer Stags:</b>	1st August to 30th April (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)
<b>Sika Deer Hinds:</b>	1st November to 31st March (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) 21st October to 15th February (Scotland)
<b>Fallow Bucks:</b>	1st August to 30th April
<b>Fallow Does:</b>	1st November to 31st March (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) 21st October to 15th February (Scotland)
<b>Roe Bucks:</b>	1st April to 31st October (England and Wales) 1st April to 20th October (Scotland)
<b>Roe Does:</b>	1st November to 31st March (England and Wales) 21st October to 31st March (Scotland)



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