

SINCE 1987

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## Chef Pino Posteraro's Boneless Cornish Hens

If you don't want to remove the bones from the Cornish hens, ask your butcher, who will do a neat job for a fee. Or you may just cut out the backbone with kitchen scissors and leave the remaining bones in, which will make cutting the birds in half more difficult, but not impossible. Serves 4

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### Ingredients:

#### Smoked Bacon Vinaigrette

3 slices smoked bacon, chopped  
1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar  
1 1/2 tsp sherry vinegar  
2 Tbsp olive oil

#### Cornish Hens

6 slices stale white bread, in 1/4-inch cubes  
3 Tbsp milk, warmed  
2 Tbsp olive oil  
1 Tbsp minced prosciutto  
2 Tbsp chopped fresh porcini or portobello mushrooms  
1 shallot, chopped  
1 1/2 tsp finely chopped black truffle  
1 tsp thyme leaves  
Pinch of nutmeg  
1 Tbsp grated Parmesan cheese  
1 Tbsp + 1 tsp semolina flour  
2 eggs, beaten  
2 Cornish hens, each 1 lb, boneless

#### Escargot Ragout

1 Tbsp + 2 tsp olive oil  
2 oz morels, halved if very large  
1 shallot, chopped  
2 dozen escargots, well rinsed  
4 green onions, thinly sliced  
2 tsp finely chopped parsley for garnish  
2 tsp finely chopped chives for garnish

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### Directions:



*Chef Pino Posteraro*

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**Smoked Bacon Vinaigrette**

Cook bacon in a small frying pan on low heat until crisp. Remove from the heat, then drain and discard fat. Stir in balsamic and sherry vinegars, then whisk in oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

**Cornish Hens**

Place bread cubes in a bowl and pour warm milk over them.

Heat a frying pan on medium heat. Add oil, prosciutto, porcini, shallot and truffle, then cook for about 5 minutes, or until mushrooms are soft. Remove from the heat and add milk-soaked bread, thyme and nutmeg. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in Parmesan cheese and semolina, then allow the mixture to cool. Stir in beaten eggs and blend well.

Preheat the oven to 400°f. Lay Cornish hens skin-side down on a work surface. Season the flesh with salt and pepper. Divide stuffing between the hens, then reform them into the shape of a hen. Close with skewers and string to retain their shape while roasting.

Place hens in a pan and roast in the oven for 35 to 40 minutes, or until thigh juices run clear and skin is a golden brown. Remove from the oven.

**Escargot Ragout**

Heat oil in a pot on medium-high heat. Add morels and shallot, then cook for 5 to 8 minutes, or until shallots are translucent and mushrooms are soft. Turn down the heat to medium, then stir in escargots and cook for about 10 minutes, or until the mixture is hot. Stir in green onions and remove from the heat.

**To Serve**

Carefully cut Cornish hens in half and place each half, cut-side down, on a warmed plate. Spoon ragout around each hen and drizzle the hens with smoked bacon vinaigrette. Garnish with parsley and chives.

**Wine**

CedarCreek Estate Winery Platinum Merlot