

PARTRIDGE, SAGE AND APPLE CASSEROLE

A mix of cider and game stock keeps the sage stuffed partridge lovely and moist

Serves 4

4 oven ready partridge
handful fresh sage leaves
16 shallots – peeled and left whole
30g / 1oz butter
300ml / ½ pt dry cider
300ml / ½ pt game or dark chicken stock
2 teasp. grain mustard
2 potatoes – peeled and cut into cubes
¼ celeriac – peeled and cut into cubes
1 dessert apple – peeled, cored and cut into thick slices
salt and freshly ground black pepper
deep fried sage leaves to garnish

pre-heat oven to 175C, gas mark 4

Stuff a few sage leaves into each partridge cavity. Heat the butter in a flameproof casserole and fry the birds over a high heat to brown them. Remove from casserole

Add the potato, celeriac and shallots and fry briskly to brown

Return the birds to the casserole to sit on top of the vegetables, breast sides down

Pour in the stock and cider. Stir in the mustard. Season. Scatter with the remaining sage leaves

Bring to the boil and then cover with the lid and cook in the oven for about 1¼ hours until the birds are tender and the potato and celeriac have fallen into the stock to thicken it

Remove the lid. Add the apple slices and return to the oven to brown and cook the apple – about 5 minutes should be enough

Serve scattered with the deep fried sage