



DUCK MUFFINS

Yes, you heard right. DUCK muffins! And why not? Sweet and savory are born to be together - Chinese chefs have known this for millennia. And the best muffins always have a hearty fat content - and ducks are perfect when it comes to hearty fat content. The great thing about this recipe is how it came into existence. It was during The Palette Job. We had just finished enjoying an illicitly crafted meal. The dawn was approaching quickly and we had to get moving, but we felt it only right to leave behind a morning snack as a token of our appreciation for the use of the kitchen (and bar!). I just started at the boys, saying "Name an ingredient", and they threw them out there, and it all wonderfully fell into place. "Orange" - "buttermilk" - "duck". And then the magical 'ah ha' moment --- Duck muffins!

Shop and prep list:

- 1 3/4 cup of all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp double-action baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 or 3 confit duck legs, meat removed and chopped
- 1 cup buttermilk
- an egg
- 2 tbsp duck fat, melted
- 1 tbsp melted butter
- 2 tsp of orange zest

Putting it together:

Heat your oven to 400.

Mix all the dry ingredients in a large bowl, using a whisk, and thoroughly disperse. In a separate bowl, beat the egg into the butter milk, then add the duck fat and butter. With a spatula, begin to mix the wet into the dry with simple short strokes. The key to good muffins is NOT to over-mix. There's principles of chemistry at play here that I don't have time to explain - you'll just have to have faith in the Night Chef. Don't over-mix - believe me. Add the duck pieces and orange zest. The mix should be thick and coarse.

Grease a muffin tin with butter. Using a small spoon, fill each muffin cup 2/3 full to allow head room. I like to use texas-sized muffin moulds, but the choice is yours. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes in the center of the oven, until the muffins get golden and great wafts of sweet duck roll through the house. You'll get about 2 dozen small muffins from this recipe. Try them with cranberry sauce!

