

## Confit and Shishitos

8 quail legs or chicken wings, cut into sections  
2 cups fat, such as duck fat, ghee, or neutral oil  
3 cloves garlic, split in half  
1 small red onion, roughly chopped  
1 tbsp honey  
1 tbsp stone-ground or Dijon mustard  
1 tsp salt  
1 large handful shishito peppers

Confit is something special. It's a wonderful way to cook dark, fatty meat so that it melts and gets lusciously soft. Then you crisp it in a hot oven and the contrast between the almost sticky meat and the crispy skin. It's a thing of beauty and it's a method you should get down on.

I did this recipe with quail legs because I'm pretentious and had quail legs in the fridge that needed to be cooked. Technically, my fiancé got them as a sample from his job. It's my favorite part of his job. But, anyway, chicken wings will be absolutely tasty and much easier to come by. The amounts don't really matter in this recipe, honestly. It's a method more than a recipe. This recipe seems like it takes a long time, but there's less than 20 minutes of active time. Most of the "work" is just set it and forget it type stuff. I'd start it around lunch one day, and plan to have it as a snack before dinner.

We had this dish as a tasty appetizer for two before plates of pasta. If you're into wine pairings, we found that Rioja worked quite nicely. But personally, I think this could be good party food, especially with chicken wings. Just make a bigger batch.

Right, so to confit your meat, you have two options. You can put the meat, the fat, the garlic, and the onion in a pot (make sure the meat is totally covered in fat) on the stove and cook it over very low heat for about two hours. You should see occasional bubbles coming up to the surface, like a water bug moving across a pond. Or you can throw it all in a slow cooker and slow cook it on low for 2-4 hours. The first is more traditional but the second requires much less attention. Do not attempt to pressure cook this. Pressure cooking requires liquid that will turn to steam, which fat will not, and trying to pressure cook in just fat will become extremely dangerous and can result in equipment malfunction and serious injury. Seriously, do not do it.

Regardless of which cooking method you pick; you will know your meat is ready when it's tender and almost mashes between your fingers. Once this occurs, very carefully dip out the



meat with a spider (it's a real kind of kitchen tool, I promise) or a strainer. Add the meat to a large bowl, and add in the salt, mustard, and honey. Spread out on a baking tray.

Strain the fat that's left to separate the tasty, caramelized onions and garlic from the fat. Drizzle the shishitos with about 2 tbsp of fat and spread out on the same baking sheet as the meat.

Broil the entire tray until the peppers are charred and the meat is crispy. You may want to turn the peppers over once or twice, so they heat evenly.

While they cook, make a sauce by blending the cooked onions and garlic with about 2 tbsp of fat, 1 tbsp of vinegar, and 2 tbsp of preserves of some kind. I used fig, because I was recently given a jar of fig preserves and I don't like figs very much, so I'm using them up. Turns out fig and poultry are actually delicious together. Anywho, taste your sauce and adjust for salt and acidity.

Serve the meat and peppers together while hot. I wouldn't refrigerate the sauce. The fat will make it congeal and while you can microwave it to heat back up and liquify, it looks pretty gross when it comes out of the fridge, so I'd spare yourself that.

A note on confit. Classically, the meat should be salted with regular salt, curing salt, and other seasonings, and left to cure for between 3 hours and 3 days. You by no means have to do that, especially the curing salt, but if you have time, salting the meat for an hour before you cook it would be nice. If you do that, don't put salt in later.