

BRAISING

Braised Game Birds

Old game birds – with or without hare and rabbit – can be braised to melting tenderness. Cut them into pieces – 6 to 8 each I suppose – and then flour them and brown in a frying pan. Put the prepared pieces into a suitable heavy casserole or saucepan, deglaze the frying pan with a little stock or red wine and pour these tasty juices into the container. Some diced onion and such finer-flavoured root vegetables as celeriac and parsnip are good but not necessary, but I always add a bay leaf or two. The pieces usually braise to tenderness in an hour at 170C/325F. It's worth quickly pouring off and reducing the juices, and then adding in red-currant, rowan, quince or other sharpish jelly, corrected for over sweetness with a slug of brandy or of lemon juice.