



Harissa-rubbed Roast Quail with Lentil Salad

Serves 6



INGREDIENTS

- 6 large quail (about 300g/10½oz each)
- 1½ cups cooking salt (360g/12½oz)
- 3 litres water (5½ pints)
- ⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil (80ml)
- 2 red onions, cut into thin strips
- 1 tablespoon harissa (25g/1oz)
- 1 preserved lemon, skin only, cut into very thin strips
- ⅓ cup pitted Ligurian olives (about 40g/1½oz)

Lentil Salad

- 500g black lentils (1lb 2oz)
- 1 fresh bay leaf, torn
- 2 tablespoons salt flakes (20g/¾oz)
- ⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil (80ml)
- ¼ cup strained lemon juice (60ml)
- 1 cup flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped
- 1 bunch chives, chopped

METHOD

1. Cut quail into halves and wipe out the body cavities with paper towel to remove any remaining offal or blood.
2. Place, cut side up, in a dish.
3. Dissolve salt in the water and pour over the quail; they should be covered, if they aren't, make additional brine by combining ½ cup salt (120g) per litre of water (2oz per pint). Cover and refrigerate for 1-2 hours.
4. Meanwhile, make Lentil Salad: Rinse lentils and place in a large saucepan with the bay leaf and plenty of cold water. Place over high heat, bring to a simmer, reduce heat and simmer for about 40 minutes, until just tender but still firm. Strain, return to rinsed out saucepan, with salt, oil and lemon juice and stir gently to combine well. Set aside to cool. Stir parsley and chives through, cover and set aside.
5. Remove quail from brine, wipe dry and set aside to come to room temperature.
6. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 200°C (355°F).
7. Pour ¼ cup (60ml) of the oil into a baking dish, add onion, toss well to coat in the oil and place in the oven.
8. Combine harissa with remaining oil and rub all over the quail.
9. Remove baking dish from the oven, add lemon and olives and toss well.
10. Arrange quail on top in a single layer, cut-side down.
11. Return baking dish to the oven and bake for 25–30 minutes. Then turn on the overhead grill and cook for a further couple of minutes, watching them closely, until skin is well-coloured and crisp.
12. Arrange Lentil Salad on a platter, top with quail, spoon onion, lemon, olives and cooking juices over the top and serve.