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FOOD ~ WINE ~ TRAVEL

Baked Quail with Coriander Pesto

I love quail - at least the larger, meaty Jurassic quail from Brisbane Valley. They're a perfect size for one hungry person or, if you're serving generous sides, I find even half a quail is enough for most people.
Serves 2–4

INGREDIENTS

- 2 large quails (about 300g/10½ oz each)
- Salt flakes, to taste
- 1 bunch broccolini
- Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- Coriander Pesto, for serving
- Crusty bread, for serving

Marinade
- 1 tablespoon salt flakes
- ⅔ cup dry white wine (160ml)
- 2 fresh bay leaves, torn
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil (40ml)

METHOD

1. Make Marinade: Dissolve salt in wine in a flat dish large enough to hold the butterflied quail in a single layer. Add bay and oil and stir to combine well.

2. Pat quail dry with paper towel. Use poultry shears to cut down the breastbone; wipe out the cavity with paper towel to remove any remaining offal or blood.

3. Cut either side of the backbone to halve each quail.

4. Place quail halves in the marinade (with back bones if you like) and turn to coat well.

5. Set aside, cut side down, for 60 minutes or cover and refrigerate for longer (even overnight) and remove from fridge 1 hour before cooking.

6. Preheat oven to 200°C.

7. Remove quails from marinade and place on a rack in a baking dish, cut side down.

8. Place in the oven for 20–25 minutes, until juices run clear when the thickest part of the breast is pierced with a thin skewer. If need be, turn the overhead grill on for a minute or 2 to colour the skin before removing from the oven.

9. Meanwhile, preheat a barbecue or char-grill pan on high and toss broccolini with a generous drizzle of oil.

10. Set cooked quail aside in a warm place for 5 minutes.

11. Meanwhile, place broccolini on the grill, sprinkle generously with salt and cook for about 4–5 minutes, turning regularly, until tender and well charred in spots.

12. Serve quail with Coriander Pesto, broccolini and bread.