

Rabbit In A Clay Pot

A wild boar wandering through a vineyard in Dalmatia might end up in a classic wine braised meat dish called p^âsticada, where the regional robust red wine is concentrated down to syrupy sweetness and the meat cooked long and slow to fork tenderness. There is nothing strange about this, the farmer or vintner, keeps the local wild pig numbers in check and the meat is regarded as a treat to be celebrated and shared. Wild boar salami and sausages are popular in Italy as is hare ragu. Everywhere in Europe where game is a part of the farming landscape it is regarded as dinner fare. Maybe it is the scale of our farming here in Australia that rabbits, hares, wild pigs or kangaroos are not treated the same. Seen as pests, they are disposable. It is a pity they are not regarded primarily as a food source, in particular the kangaroo is better adapted to our environment than beef cattle which badly impacts our water resources and greenhouse gas emissions. Kangaroo and game meats are leaner, so are a much healthier meat. Wild rabbit is not popular in Australia; perhaps it is the gamey flavour and lack of tenderness that puts people off but by starting with a younger rabbit, a bit of soaking in wine vinegar and then slow cooking in a clay pot you retain moisture and can achieve the tenderness we like to enjoy. Wild rabbit is available at game specialist like the Chicken Pantry at the Queen Victoria Market and some butchers might get them in occasionally but generally they are harder to come by these days. More common now is farmed rabbit; while still a lean meat it does have a little more fat and the flesh is more tender than wild rabbit. I still like to give farmed rabbit the slow cooking treatment, though for less time than a wild one, and using a clay pot is perfect for retaining moisture and tenderness. Kilmore Rabbits sells farmed rabbit whole or cut into pieces, along with the liver at Melbourne farmers' markets. Farmed rabbit also occasionally available at

[MeatSmith](#).

see also my [Rabbit, Barley and Pumpkin Pie](#) recipe.

Clay Pot Rabbit with Mushrooms

- 1 rabbit, jointed
- olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- pinch salt
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 4 sprigs thyme
- few sage leaves
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 cups fresh mushrooms (shiitake, Swiss Browns, Shimeji or chestnut mushrooms)
- 1 cup white wine
- 1 cup stock, chicken or rabbit stock made with the rib bones
- 1 tbs butter
- 1 tbs flour

Saute the onion with a pinch of salt. Add garlic and mushrooms and cooked for a few minutes. Place in a clay pot. Brown the rabbit and place in the pot. Deglaze the pan with the wine and add to the clay pot along with the stock and herbs. Cook in a 150°C oven for 1-2 hours, until fork tender. Drain off the liquid and thicken it with a little butter and flour. Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the flour and stir for a few minutes and then add the cooking liquid to thicken. Serve with mashed potatoes.





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