

# TheRecipeWorks - Peking Duck

## Peking Duck

Serves: 4

1 Peking duck 4 1/2 to 5 lbs head intact  
6 cups Water  
1 teaspoon Honey  
4 tablespoons Rice wine  
2 tablespoons White vinegar  
5 tablespoons Cornstarch slurry mixed with water  
Vegetable oil  
Pancakes:  
3 cups All-purpose flour  
1 1/2 cups Boiling water  
1 tablespoon Cold water  
Sesame oil  
Scallion brushes and Hoisin sauce as accompaniments

Remove wing tips and feet from duck. Neck skin should be intact with only a tiny hole made about 2 inches above the base of the neck. Remove cavity fat and discard. Rinse the duck and massage the entire body by rubbing the skin back and forth, loosening it from the meat. Make sure skin is not punctured. Insert a bicycle pump hose into the neck hole. Keep cavity closed as you pump air into the duck -- inflating it until the skin is taut, rubbing and rolling the skin as it is being inflated to distribute air evenly. Insert a meat hook through the neck bone and hang to dry, in a cool place, for 1 hour.

In a wok combine the boiling water, honey, rice wine, white vinegar, and cornstarch slurry, and stir until lightly thickened. Hold the duck by the hook and dip it in and out of the boiling water, turning it from side to side, while ladling water over the skin. Do this until the skin is well coated, about 1 minute. Then hang duck up to dry for at least 12 hours or overnight in a draft near a window or other breezy place, spreading paper on floor to catch drippings. If no cool area is available, hang duck from back of a chair and blow a fan on it for several hours. (Alternatively, set duck, unwrapped, on a rack with a pan underneath to catch drippings. Refrigerate, turning occasionally.)

If your oven is large and tall, remove all racks except the top one. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

Cover a large pan with aluminum foil to reflect heat and to catch drippings and place the pan in the bottom of the oven. Hook the duck vertically over the top rack in the center of the oven over the drip pan. Roast for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 and roast for 1 1/4 hours.

For the pancakes: Mix the flour with the boiling water until combined, and add 1 tablespoon cold water to mixture. Knead the dough for 4 minutes, or until soft and smooth. Let it rest for 30 minutes, covered with a bowl.

Divide the dough into 2 equal portions and knead it until smooth. Roll one portion into a 16-inch log and divide it into 16 pieces. Repeat with the remaining dough. Take each piece and stand it upright on the heel of your hand, round off the dough and then flatten it with your other hand into a circle 2 to 2 1/2 inches in diameter. Paint surface of half of the pieces with pastry brush dipped in sesame oil; place remaining pieces on the oiled pieces, making 16 pairs.

Using rolling pin roll the pairs into thin pancakes about 6 to 6 1/4 inches in diameter, rotating circles frequently to insure even thickness.

Heat an unoled frying pan until hot. Add 1 pair of cakes and fry 1 minute or until light brown spots appear underneath. Lift up the edges to check for spots. Turn them over and allow them to puff up, indicating they are done. Separate each pair into 2 pancakes. Repeat with remaining pancakes.

Transfer the pancakes to a steamer and steam them for 5 to 10 minutes.

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To finish the duck: Put the duck in a wok with 4 to 6-inches of oil, heated to 375 degrees. Ladle the oil over duck. Cook the duck in this fashion for 2 1/2 minutes per side to crisp the skin. Put the duck on a cutting board. Disjoint the wings and drumsticks and place them apart at either end of serving platter, outlining the form of a whole duck. With a razor-sharp knife carve the skin on the duck with a very thin layer of meat, trying to make slices as large as possible. Transfer them to the platter. Remove all the meat from the carcass and cut it into strips about 1 to 2 inches long. Arrange the meat strips in center of platter and then cut the strips of skin crosswise into comparable pieces. Lay these over meat.