

## Seared Duck Breast with Huckleberry Gastrique

<http://userealbutter.com/2016/03/02/duck-breast-huckleberry-sauce-recipe/>  
from *Dry Creek Vineyard*

4 individual duck breasts, skin on, about 6-8 oz. each, patted dry  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup red wine vinegar  
2 cups fruity, low-tannin zinfandel  
1 1/2 cups huckleberries, fresh or frozen  
1 cup roast chicken or duck stock  
1 cup veal stock (I used 1/2 cup roast chicken stock and 1/2 cup beef stock)  
sea salt  
freshly ground black pepper

Use a sharp knife to score the duck skin of each breast in a criss cross pattern, about a 1-inch grid. Lightly salt the duck breasts on both sides and set aside.

In a small nonreactive saucepan, combine the sugar and red wine vinegar. Set over medium heat and stir to dissolve the sugar, then let the mixture boil until it reduces to about a third of the original volume. [The fumes will be quite potent, so open a window and run your hood vent.] When the liquid becomes syrupy enough that a spatula dragged across the bottom of the pan leaves a part for a second, remove from heat and set the vinegar syrup aside.

In a larger saucepan, combine the wine and 1/2 cup of the huckleberries. Set over medium high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce the liquid until it is thick and syrupy (about 15-20 minutes for me). Add both stocks to the pan. Reduce the liquid by half (about 15-20 minutes). Stir half of the vinegar syrup into the sauce. Add more to taste until you achieve the right balance between sweet and sour. Stir in the rest of the huckleberries. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil. Heat a large sauté pan over high heat. When the pan is hot, place the duck breasts, skin-side down, in the pan in a single layer, taking care not to crowd them. Reduce the heat to medium and cook the duck, basting the tops of the duck breasts with the fat from the pan on occasion, until the skins are browned and crisp. Turn the breasts over and cook for another minute until seared. Remove the breasts from the stove and place each one skin-side down on the baking sheet. Bake in the oven for four minutes or until the duck is rare to medium rare. Medium rare should register 135°F on a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the breast. Remove from oven and let the duck breasts rest on a plate for a few minutes. Slice each breast and serve with the huckleberry gastrique. Serves 4.