



#606A-DATE-STUFFED GAME HENS Serves 4

1/2 cup loosely packed chopped cilantro leaves
10 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1 tablespoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon dried marjoram
4 Cornish game hens
1 cup tawny port wine
1/2 cup olive oil

1/4 cup balsamic vinegar or red wine vinegar
4 tablespoons honey
2 oranges, thinly sliced
2 lemons, thinly sliced
40 whole dates (approximately 1 pound, or 2 cups), pitted
3 tablespoons minced green olives
Salt
Freshly ground black pepper

In a small bowl, combine 6 tablespoons of the cilantro, the garlic, cumin, paprika, and marjoram. Rub the mixture generously on both hens and transfer them to a large re-sealable plastic bag.

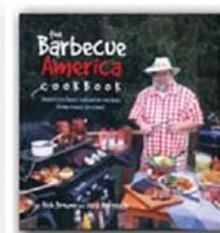
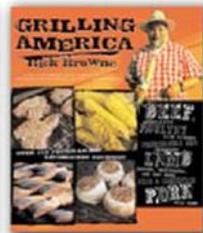
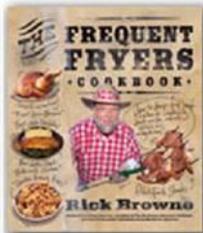
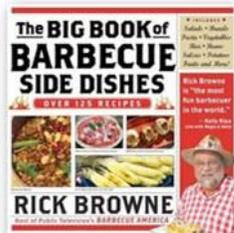
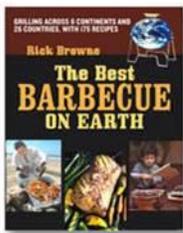
In another small bowl, whisk the port, oil, vinegar, and honey and pour over the birds and into the cavities. Seal the bag and refrigerate for 8 to 10 hours.

When ready to cook, drain the hens, wipe away excess marinade, and pour the marinade into a saucepan to boil for 12 minutes.

Prepare a charcoal or gas grill for indirect cooking (it is not necessary to use a drip pan for this recipe). Preheat to 375°F.

Arrange the orange and lemon slices in the bottom of a Dutch oven. Add the game hens, breast side up, sprinkle with the dates and olives, and season with salt and pepper.

Transfer the pot, uncovered, to the grill rack over indirect heat. Lower the grill lid, and cook, basting occasionally, until the hens are cooked through, or when





the internal temperature in the thickest part of the thigh reaches 170°F, about 40 minutes.

Transfer the hens to a warmed platter and cover with aluminum foil until ready to serve. Pour the juices from the pan into a small saucepan, straining out and discarding the 7 lemon and orange slices. Boil, whisking often, until the liquid has reduced to 1/2 cup, about 5 minutes.

Garnish the hens with the remaining cilantro and serve with the sauce on the side.

