

Chukar Cakes

One great way to cook chukar or quail is to coarsely shred the meat with a knife and simply substitute it for the crab in your favorite crab cake recipe. This has an added advantage of making it easy to remove any shot in the meat, as it becomes readily visible during the shredding process. Here's my favorite, but remember, any crab cake recipe will work fine:

Spicy Chukar Cakes

Ingredients (most these are available at some grocery stores, all of them are available at Wegmans):

For cakes:

Breasts from 4-6 chukar or 6-8 quail, shredded coarsely

1/4 cup mayonnaise (Kewpie Brand Japanese preferred)

1 TBS Thai or Vietnamese Chili Garlic Sauce (such as Tuong Ot Toi)

1 tsp fresh lemon juice

1 tsp dark sesame oil

1 egg, beaten

1/2 tsp salt

2 TBS sesame seeds, preferably white & black mixed.

1 1/2 cup panko (Japanese breadcrumbs, substitute any light breadcrumb)

For Sauce, blend together and let stand in refrigerator:

1/2 cup mayonnaise (Kewpie if available)

2 tsp Mirin (sweet Japanese Cooking wine) or dark corn syrup

1 TBS finely chopped Gari (Japanese pickled ginger) or 1/2 tsp or ground ginger

splash of soy sauce

Directions:

Preheat oven to 275

In a bowl, combine mayo, chili sauce, lemon juice, sesame oil, egg and salt, blending well. Add chukar meat and 1/2 cup panko, toss to combine. Cover and refrigerate 1/2 hour.

Remove from fridge, and shape mixture into small cakes and roll in panko to coat. Place cakes on a plate and return to refrigerator for 1/2 hour. Cakes will be FRAGILE - don't be tempted to use more break crumbs. The cakes will firm up upon cooking, and you don't want them to be breadly.

Heat oil in a large, non-stick skillet over medium heat. Cook cakes in small batches - do not crowd. Fry for 2-3 minutes per side till gently browned. DO NOT OVERCOOK. Transfer to a plate

lined with paper towel, and keep warm in oven till all cakes are done. Garnish with lemon wedges, serve with sauce.

If you have a deep fryer, these will be outrageous - but then, everything is better deep-fried! If you make them in small 1.5" balls, they make an awesome appetizer or party nosh.