

## ***CLAY POT CORNISH HENS WITH RICE-PECAN STUFFING***

*(from the Bewitching Kitchen)*

2 cornish hens  
kosher salt and freshly-ground black pepper  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1/4 cup chopped onion (I used fennel instead)  
1/4 cup chopped celery  
1/3 cup coarsely chopped pecans  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage  
1 cup cooked rice  
1/2 cup dried cranberries  
flat-leaf parsley, chopped (amount to taste)  
kosher salt and freshly-ground black pepper

*for glaze:*

2 tablespoons olive oil  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
2 tablespoons honey  
splash of lemon juice

Make the stuffing: Heat the olive oil in a skillet. Add onions (or fennel) and celery and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add pecans, sage, and 1/4 teaspoon each kosher salt and pepper. Cook until pecans are fragrant. Remove from heat and stir in cooked rice, cranberries, and parsley. Season to taste with additional salt and pepper. Set aside. Make the glaze: mix all ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.

If using the clay pot, soak it for a couple of hours. If roasting in a regular pan, heat the oven to 425F. Remove hens from the refrigerator about 30 minutes prior to roasting. Rinse hens, and pat dry with a paper towel. Lightly season the cavities of the hens with salt and pepper. Spoon about 1/2 cup of stuffing into each cavity. Tie the legs closed with kitchen twine and tuck the wings under the birds. If using the clay pot, improvise a little “rack” using aluminum foil so that they don’t sit directly on the pot. Place the hens in the clay pot and place in a cold oven. Turn it to 450F. Roast for 1 hour, then open the clay pot and roast for 15 minutes longer, brushing with the glaze a couple of times.

If roasting in a regular pan, brush the skin with olive oil and roast for 20 minutes at 425F, then reduce the temperature to 375F and roast for about 50 minutes longer, brushing with the glaze a few times during roasting (if possible, check temperature at thigh, it should read 180F).

Let the hens rest for 15 minutes, then cut the kitchen twine and serve.