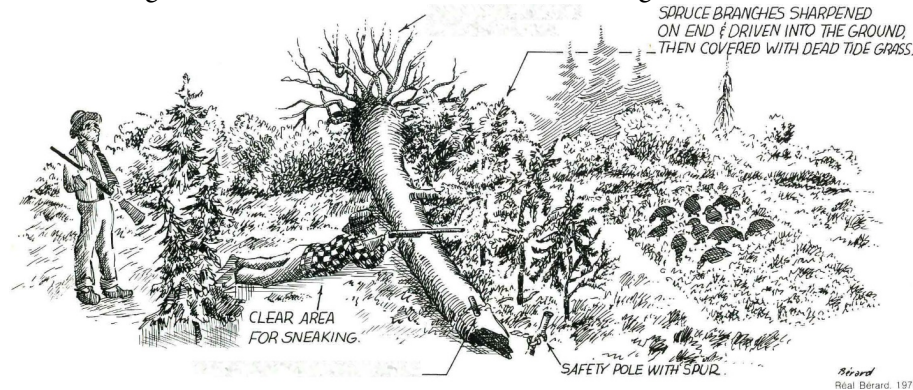


gorges were baited with herring, tied in long lines and anchored to the mud flats while the tide was low. When the tide rose, ducks would dive for the herring, swallow the hook and drown.

Individual ducks were also taken by bow and arrow, spear, club, and hand net. Ducks have excellent vision and under most circumstances, it is difficult for hunters to get within range before they flush. However, a cunning technique called “pit lamping” blinds the ducks and allows the hunters to get very close. After dark, when depth perception is challenging, a team of two hunters would light a fire or torch at the front of their canoe. They could then paddle right up to a duck and kill it with an arrow, spear, club, or net. After European contact, mining lamps (pit lamps), and flashlights replaced torches and shotguns replaced projectiles. Duck blinds are another traditional technique that enables the hunter to get close to a duck. Blinds are constructed near duck feeding areas from sticks and limbs. The hunter then waits behind the screen of vegetation for a flock to land within shooting distance. This method is still used today.



Traditional duck hunting blinds can be used for guns as well. Illustration from Edwards 1979 "Indian Spaghetti"

Eating Duck: Roasted or stewed ducks are a fatty and flavorful meal. Clean the duck by removing the head, guts, and feet and hanging the body upside-down for a day or two to allow the blood to drain. The feathers are removed by hand and any down or small feathers that remain are seared off over a fire, which adds a smoky flavor. Ducks are skewered and roasted horizontally over a bed of hot coals, or hung from a rope and slowly spun vertically beside a hot fire until a leg can be easily torn from the body. The meat can also be boiled with vegetables to make stew.

Flocks of Widgeons and Scoters historically numbered in the tens of thousands and provided a significant source of food to Aboriginal communities. Some groups, such as the *Kanasisi* of the lower Columbia River valley were even named for their reliance on waterfowl. *Kanasisi* means “People of the Scoter.”



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Photo credits: Duck in water (Abe Lloyd), duck in flight (istock) duck soup (Elise Krohn)

Artwork of duck and cattail by Joe Seymour

Duck Soup

This fragrant and comforting soup is sure to warm your chilly bones in wintertime. Duck imparts a fatty savory medicine that speaks directly to our taste buds- ensuring satisfaction with every bite. Soups are a great way to get nourishment in to your body. The simmering of wholesome ingredients like carrots, celery and good quality waterfowl protein make it easy for your body to obtain the medicine.



- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion
- 1 pound red potatoes
- 2 carrots
- 3 celery stalks
- 2 cups diced duck meat
- Pinch of sea salt
- Pinch of fresh ground black pepper
- 2 quarts duck stock
- *optional – 1 teaspoon juniper berries

In a large soup pot warm up the oil over medium heat. Add onion, potatoes, carrots, celery and meat. Add salt and pepper and sauté veggies until they turn translucent. Add stock and duck meat, then bring to a simmer, allowing to cook for 30 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste and serve with bannock bread.

Cook time: 45 minutes. Serves 6

Recipe from Valerie Segrest, Muckleshoot Tribe



Leftovers

by Inez Bill, Tulalip Tribes

When I was a young girl, we did not refer to the foods that we ate as traditional foods. It was simply food that we were grateful to have, be it breakfast, lunch, or dinner. My family lived and continues to live a ceremonial way of life. Helping people and feeding people was something we did as needed without question. When we had a gathering, people would bring whatever they had or could for the table. When that particular occasion was over, we would send leftovers home with elders and visitors. This is what I remember the food at that time was: ducks, shellfish, fish, deer, elk, octopus, teas. Some families would share their home-canned berries and fruit, such as peaches, pears, cherries and plums. As a young person, I would help in the kitchen. We would feed the visitors, elders and locals. It was not until we fed everyone that we were able to eat. It was a real treat to have some home canned fruit or even fruit juice.

At the times when we would serve duck soup, if there were any leftovers, sometimes we felt lucky and excited to be able to take some home. Therefore, the next day my breakfast would be leftover duck soup before I went to school. We all know that it tastes better the next day. For the most part, our breakfast was not cheerios or corn flakes with milk, toast and orange juice. Our breakfast was whatever was available or leftover from the evening meals. That was a time when hunters hunted, fisherman fished, and families put food away. It really was a simpler, slower, natural way of life.

For a variety of reasons, in the past 40 plus years, we as a people have unfortunately drifted away from that way of life. We still gather, we still feed, we still pray and dance but the food has changed due to societal development, which has drastically changed our hunting and gathering sites. Today areas are polluted and toxic. Our current situation has changed our cultural continuity in regards to our health and spiritual wellbeing. We have always believed that to have a healthy people you must have a healthy environment.

Within the past few years, we are collectively, as a people, working towards stabilizing the natural resources by sharing our concerns with other tribes and state agencies. It is only now that we are referring to our natural foods as traditional foods, by remembering how to gather them, prepare them, cook them, and bring these memories to our tables.

