

# Pan seared pheasant breast on a bed of rice

By Chris Sykes

Pheasant season started last Saturday, bringing back so many childhood memories. While I spent much of my teen years hunting pheasant, I rarely ate it. My friends and I would hunt almost every weekday and weekend during the season. If we didn't have football practice, we'd rush out of school, hop into my dad's GMC pickup—shotguns on the gun rack—and head off before it got dark. Back then, it wasn't uncommon to bring guns to school as long as they stayed in the truck.

Some days we'd hit our limit; other days we'd come back empty-handed. There's something thrilling about shooting at a fast-moving target that jumps out from the brush 10 feet ahead of you. One of the best things about pheasant hunting was that it didn't require a major time commitment—you could spend just an afternoon hunting.

I'll never forget the first time my dad took me pheasant hunting on the backside of the Heppner Reservoir. It was a thrilling experience that stayed with me until this day. Despite all my years of hunting, I rarely ate pheasant because I convinced myself it was too gamey. Since at the time I wasn't a fan of pheasant, I usually gave my birds to friends who wanted them. That belief stuck with me for years, and it took me 30 years to realize how wrong I was.

Pheasant season starts in early October and runs until the end of December. Last Thanksgiving, I decided to cook pheasant for the first time as an extra dish since we had so many guests. Even though I still thought it might taste gamey, I gave it a try. To my surprise, the pheasant breasts turned out tender and flavorful—nothing like I expected. This year, I plan to cook the legs and thighs as well.

The recipe I found for pan-seared pheasant breast with red peppers was a game changer. The pheasant was tender, moist, and delicious—nothing like the gamey taste I imagined in my head. It's funny how long it took me to appreciate something I spent so much time hunting, but I'm glad I finally did. I can't wait until my son, Waylon, and daughter Sophie are old enough to enjoy this with me. I also want to thank my father for taking me pheasant hunting for the first time and my friends for inviting me to hunt on their land. Their generosity made so many of these memories possible.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 whole pheasant (wild)
- Olive oil
- Butter
- Any poultry seasoning of your choice
- Fresh rosemary
- Garlic cloves
- Red peppers or Jalapenos (optional)
- Tomatoes
- Lime juice
- Celery, carrots, and onions (for braising and stock)
- 3/4 inch of broth or water (for braising)
- Salt and pepper
- Your choice of wild or white rice

**Step 1: Break Down the Pheasant**  
Remove the Legs  
Start by cutting off the legs at the joint.  
Remove the Breast  
Make a clean cut down each

side of the breastbone to remove both breast halves. Save the Carcass  
Set aside the remaining carcass for stock.  
**Step 2: Make Pheasant Stock (Optional)**  
Ingredients for Stock:  
Leftover pheasant carcass  
2 celery stalks (chopped)  
2 carrots (chopped)  
1 onion (chopped)  
Cold water  
Instructions:  
Brown the pheasant carcass with celery, carrots, and onions in a large pot. Once browned, add cold water to cover the carcass and vegetables. Let the stock simmer gently for a few hours. Strain the stock and store for future use.

**Step 3: Cook the Legs and Thighs (Braising)**  
Ingredients for Braising:  
2 celery stalks (chopped)  
2 carrots (chopped)  
1 onion (chopped)  
3/4 inch of liquid (stock or water)  
Instructions:  
Preheat the oven to 300°F (150°C).  
Brown the legs and thighs in a hot pan with a bit of olive oil.  
Place the browned legs and thighs into a roasting pan with celery, carrots, and onions.  
Add 3/4 inch of liquid (stock or water) to the roasting pan.  
Cover the pan with foil or a tight-fitting lid.  
Braise in the oven for several hours until the meat pulls easily from the bone.  
Once done, remove the meat, and add the bones to your stockpot if making stock.

**Step 4: Cook the Breast (Pan-Searing)**  
Ingredients for Cooking Breast:  
Olive oil  
Butter  
Any poultry seasoning of your choice or just salt and pepper  
Fresh rosemary (chopped)  
Garlic cloves (minced)  
Red peppers or Jalapeño (optional, chopped)  
Tomatoes (chopped)  
Lime juice

**Instructions:**  
Heat olive oil in a cast-iron skillet over medium heat. Add butter once the skillet is hot.  
Place the pheasant breasts in the hot skillet.  
Season the breasts with poultry rub or salt and pepper and add fresh rosemary. Throw in chopped peppers and tomatoes alongside the breasts  
Flip the breasts after a few minutes and reduce the heat slightly.  
Add garlic toward the end of cooking to avoid burning.  
If desired, add chopped jalapeño for heat.  
Squeeze lime juice over the breasts during the final minutes of cooking.  
Cook until the breasts are just slightly pink in the center to avoid drying out.

**Step 5: Final Touches and Serving**  
Remove the pheasant breasts and veggies from the skillet once cooked through but still moist.  
Serve over rice (or your choice of sides).  
Garnish with the rosemary, lime, garlic, and any pan juices.  
Optionally, serve with the braised legs and thighs for a complete pheasant dish.  
Enjoy your perfectly cooked pheasant, full of rich flavors and tender meat!

## ~ G-T Trophy Corner ~

The Heppner Gazette Times would like to see pictures of your trophy animals from this hunting season. Please send a photo along with your name, age, town you live in, location of the hunt and a description of the animal to editor@rapidsolve.net, upload to Heppner.net or text to 541-215-2274.



Colden Hoeft - Heppner



Garin Hoeft - Heppner

## Notice of board meeting of Ione School District

Notice is hereby given that the Ione School District Board of Directors will meet for a Regular Board Meeting on Tuesday, October 15, 2024, at 5:30 pm at the Ione School District cafeteria. There will be no work session this month. Join the meeting now Meeting ID: bgn-axbt-hgx Passcode: 151 980 723#



Birthright of Morrow County will be having a 4-year anniversary dinner with a speaker on Sunday, November 3, 2024 at 5:00 pm. St. Patrick's Parish Hall. Tickets are \$20.00 per person or \$35.00 a couple. Purchase tickets at Murrays or pay at the door  
Call for more information at 541-676-0530.  
Please come out and support us!

## Heppner burn ban lifted Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>

The Heppner Fire Department is lifting the

burn ban starting at 8am Wednesday October 16th.

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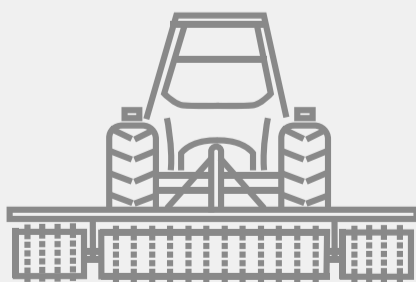
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This cozy 1950s home, located in a peaceful community, offers a blend of classic charm and modern comforts. The 3-bed, 2-bath property features a finished basement with two bedrooms and a bonus room, perfect for extra space or an office. The well-maintained yard, complete with mature fruit trees, provides a relaxing outdoor space. Essential appliances, including a fridge, range, washer, and dryer, are included, making it move-in ready. Sold as-is or with conventional financing, this charming home is ready for you to make it your own! 285 W ARCADE ST  
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**Sold**  
**\$390,000**  
Experience luxury living in this stunning home located in Heppner, Oregon. Built in 2016, this beautiful property boasts luxurious features such as heated bathroom floors, a central vacuum system, a water softener, and central air for ultimate comfort. Enjoy the convenience of being close to the high school, Heppner pool, baseball park, elementary school, fishing spots, and downtown, all within walking distance. With an expansive lot, this is the perfect opportunity to own your dream home in an ideal location. 480 W Morgan St Heppner MLS#: 24057570

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