

Food

THE FAVORITE BIRD

Without a doubt, CHICKEN is one of the most important and popular food products in the world. Having originated in the jungles of Southeast Asia, it began its journey around the globe possibly as early as 1400 B.C., as hungry hunters, having discovered what a tasty morsel it was, began to capture and carry the bird with them, eastward across the Pacific Islands and westward across Asia to Europe. Then in the early 1600's, settlers brought chickens with them to the American colonies, where to this day, it is considered a preferred dinner dish.

Chicken is not only easy to prepare, tasty and adaptable to many modes of preparation, but it is plentiful and therefore, cheaper than most main course foods.

There are literally thousands upon thousands of ways to prepare chicken. Here are some recipes that you may not have tried. They are easy and quick to prepare and delicious, too!

CHICKEN PICCATA

4 whole chicken breasts, skinned, boned, halved
 1/2 cup flour
 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
 Paprika
 1/4 cup clarified butter
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 2 to 4 tablespoons dry Madeira wine or water
 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 Lemon slices
 3 to 4 tablespoons capers (optional)
 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley

Place chicken breasts between 2 sheets of waxed paper and pound them until thin (about 1/2 inch). Combine flour, salt, pepper and paprika in bag. Add breasts and coat well; shake off excess. Heat butter and olive oil in large skillet until bubbling. Saute chicken breasts, a few at a time, 2 to 3 minutes on each side. **DO NOT OVERCOOK.** Drain on towels and keep warm. Drain off all but two tablespoons of butter and oil. Stir Madeira or water into drippings, scraping bottom of skillet to loosen any browned bits. Add lemon juice and heat briefly. Return chicken to skillet, interspersing with lemon slices, and heat until sauce thickens. Add capers; sprinkle with minced parsley.

This dish goes well with fettuccini, and cooked chilled broccoli dressed with olive oil and lemon juice and a sprinkling of pine nuts. A chilled white wine also goes well. Serves 4 to 8.

WRAPPED HERB CHICKEN

3 whole chicken breasts, skinned, boned, halved
 6 tablespoons chopped chives, tarragon or chervil (or any fresh herb)
 3/4 cup fresh lemon juice
 6 tablespoons onion powder, or to taste
 6 tablespoons butter
 6 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

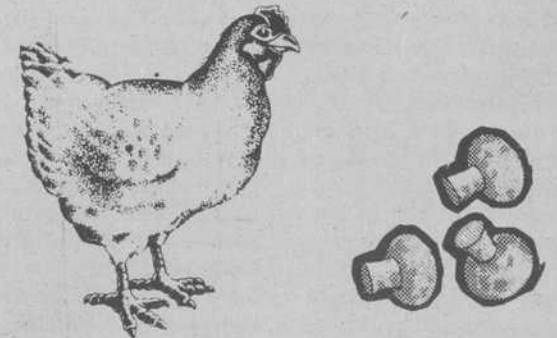
Preheat oven to 375° F. Place each chicken piece on large sheet of foil. Top each with 1 tablespoon chopped herbs, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, 1 teaspoon onion powder, 1 tablespoon butter and 1 tablespoon parsley. Fold foil tightly around chicken with double folds on each edge. Bake 30 minutes.

Delicious served hot, this easy dish may also be refrigerated and presented cold for lunches, picnics or a late supper. 3 to 6 servings.

CHICKEN PRIMAVERA

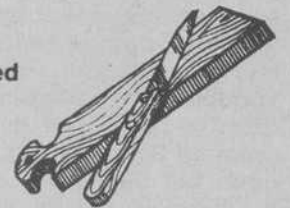
1 broiler-fryer (3 lbs.), cut in 8 pieces
 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 1 teaspoon ground ginger
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 3 cloves garlic, finely minced
 1/2 cup chicken broth
 1 lb. asparagus spears OR: 1 package (10 oz.) frozen asparagus spears
 2 medium-size zucchini (about 3/4 lb.)
 2 yellow squash (about 3/4 lb.)
 2 medium-size sweet red peppers
 1/2 lb. fresh mushrooms, sliced
 1/4 cup soy sauce
 3 tablespoons dry sherry
 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

Shake chicken in plastic bag with flour, ginger, salt and pepper until coated. Fry chicken in oil in large skillet, turning frequently, about 5 minutes or until golden brown. Add garlic and chicken broth to skillet. Cover; simmer 15 minutes. Meanwhile, trim, peel and cut asparagus into 1-inch pieces. (If using frozen, just cut into 1-inch pieces.) Cut zucchini and yellow squash into 1-inch chunks. Halve and seed peppers; cut into 1-inch pieces. Add asparagus, zucchini, squash, red peppers and mushrooms to skillet. Add soy sauce, cherry and ginger. Stir gently to mix. Cover; simmer 10 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender. Serves 8.



CHICKEN MONTEREY

4 large whole chicken breasts, skinned, boned, halved
 Salt and Pepper
 1/2 cup butter or margarine
 1/2 cup chopped onion
 1 garlic clove, minced
 8 large mushrooms, chopped
 2 tablespoons flour
 1 teaspoon celery salt
 1/2 teaspoon white pepper
 1/2 cup chicken stock
 1/2 cup white wine
 1 avocado, mashed
 1 1/2 cups grated Monterey Jack Cheese



Place chicken breasts between two sheets of waxed paper and pound them until thin (about 1/4 inch). Lightly sprinkle with salt and pepper and dust with flour. Melt 1/4 cup butter in a 10 to 12-inch skillet and quickly saute breasts a few at a time until golden. Remove to separate plate and set aside. Preheat oven to 350° F. Melt remaining 1/4 cup butter in same skillet and saute onion, garlic and mushrooms slowly until vegetables are cooked but not brown. Stir in flour, celery salt, pepper, chicken stock and wine. Cook over low heat until thickened, about 4 to 5 minutes. Stir in mashed avocado and 1/2 cup grated cheese, blending well. Adjust seasoning to taste. Arrange breasts in a 3-quart baking dish or in individual ramekins. Spoon avocado mixture on each breast and top with remaining cheese. Bake 10 to 15 minutes, until chicken is cooked and cheese is melted. Serves 4 to 8.

POULET CHAMPS D'ORE

1 4-lb. fryer chicken cut into pieces
 Salt
 Pepper
 4 T. margarine
 3 T. brandy
 1 egg yolk
 1/4 cup onions minced
 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
 1 cup Champs D'ore or other sparkling dry white wine
 1/2 tsp basil
 1 large tomato, peeled, seeded and chopped

Salt and pepper chicken. Melt margarine in large saucepan. Saute chicken until brown all over. Heat brandy, flame it, and pour over chicken. Add onions, Champs D'ore, basil and tomato. Cover and simmer for 40 minutes. Beat yolk with cream in a bowl. Pour off some of the liquid in which the chicken is cooking into yolk mixture. Stir to prevent curdling. Remove chicken to a platter. Add mixture to saucepan, stir. Strain sauce through a fine sieve. Pour over chicken. Serve hot or cold. Serves 6.

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