

Dan Ralston's Kitchen

Coc Au Vin

Serves 8 (or more)

6 skinless, boned chicken breast halves
6 skinless, boned chicken thighs
Flour for dredging (seasoned with salt and pepper)
3 Tbs. Butter
3 Tbs. Safflower Oil
1 Bottle Red Wine (use a spicy Zinfandel or Shiraz)
2 14.5 oz. Cans Chicken Broth
1 6 oz. Can Contadina Tomato Paste
1 Bay Leaf
3 Tbs. Fresh Flat Leaf Parsley (chopped)
¼ tsp Dried Thyme
¼ tsp Allspice
1 Tbs. Brown Sugar
3 Large dashes Worcestershire Sauce
20-24 Pearl Onions, peeled but left whole
20 to 24 Button Mushrooms, cleaned and whole
Salt and Pepper to taste

This is my version of the French classic chicken with red wine. It is great for a dinner party because it can be done in advance (even a day in advance and slowly re-warmed.) Serve it with a starch of your choice but I like it with Barley "Risotto," pearl barely prepared like risotto with chopped onion, parsley, carrots and celery.

Dredge the chicken in the seasoned flour. In a Dutch oven heat the butter and Safflower oil over high heat. When hot but not yet smoking, start adding the chicken pieces and brown on all sides in batches. Pre-heat the oven to 250°. As the chicken is browned place the pieces in a large covered casserole and keep warm in the oven.* When all of the chicken is done add 1 cup of red wine to the Dutch oven and, with a wooden spoon,

de-glaze the pan by scraping up all of the brown bits left in the bottom and sides of the pan. Add the rest of the wine, the chicken broth, the tomato paste, bay leaf, parsley, thyme, allspice, Worcestershire sauce and brown sugar. Bring to a boil then reduce heat to a simmer and simmer for 1 hour. Taste and adjust seasoning to your taste, especially the salt, pepper, sugar and Worcestershire sauce. If you are using regular canned chicken broth it contains a lot of salt and you should not need to add more. Add the mushrooms and onions to the broth and simmer just until the mushrooms have begun to cook and soften. Turn oven up to 300°. Add the broth with the mushrooms and onions to the chicken in the casserole dish and stir to evenly distribute the contents. Braise the dish in the oven for 2 and ½ hours. During the last hour place the casserole cover ajar to let the liquid reduce and thicken.

Serve with the same style of wine you used for the dish and some crusty bread to mop up the broth.

*Alternately you can do the whole dish in the dutch oven if it is heavy, with a tight fitting lid like Le Creuset. Put the chicken on a lipped baking pan cover with foil and place in the 250 oven.. When the sauce is ready add the chicken back to the pot with accumulated juices and finish the dish in the oven at 300.

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