

Coq au Vin à la Chartres

Marinade

2 teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon powdered bay leaf
2 teaspoons thyme
½ teaspoon pepper

Chicken

1 chicken, 10 pieces, back removed
4-ounce chunk bacon
¼ cup cognac
3 cups red wine
2½ cups brown chicken stock
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 pound mushrooms
2 cloves mashed garlic
1 tablespoon currant jelly
7 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons olive oil
¼ cup flour
Parsley, thyme, bay leaf, rosemary
Salt and pepper
Minced parsley for decoration

Dry Marinade

Mix together 2 teaspoons salt, ½ teaspoon powdered bay leaf, 2 teaspoons thyme, and ½ teaspoon pepper in a small bowl. Rub the mixture into all 10 pieces (breasts cut in half) of the chicken. Place the chicken in a casserole, and refrigerate uncovered overnight.

Brown Chicken Stock

Dry the chicken back, neck, and the giblets, and any other extra chicken parts you have on hand. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large kettle, and brown the chicken back, parts, and giblets very thoroughly. Remove them to a side dish.

Cut the onion and the tomato in half. Heat a small skillet, and when hot place the onion and the tomato cut-side down. Cook until the bottoms are brown and caramelized, but not burnt. Remove from the pan. Deglaze the pan with ⅓ cup of water and reserve, straining out any blackened parts.

Roughly chop the carrots and the celery. Brown them in the large kettle where the chicken parts have been browned. Pour out the browning fat.

Stock

Chicken back, neck, and giblets
1 large onion
2 carrots
2 celery stalks
1 tomato
4-6 cups beef broth
Parsley, thyme, bay leaf, rosemary
8 black peppercorns
2 tablespoons oil

Glazed Onions

12-18 small white onions
2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
½ cup brown chicken stock
Parsley, thyme, bay leaf, rosemary
Salt and pepper to taste

Add 4-6 cups of beef broth to the carrots and celery, plus the reserved deglazing liquid from the tomato and onion. Bring to the simmer, and add the browned chicken parts, and the caramelized onion and tomato. Skim off any accumulated fat globules. Make an herb bouquet by tying together with kitchen twine sprigs of parsley, thyme, rosemary, and a bay leaf. Bury the herb bouquet in the broth. Add the peppercorns.

Simmer slowly for 3-4 hours partially covered, leaving a small opening. Taste for saltiness. When you have rendered every bit of flavor from the chicken and vegetables, strain the liquid into a large bowl, pressing down on the vegetable to extract all liquid. Place the bowl in the refrigerator. When the fat has risen to the top, skim off the fat with paper towels, and return to the refrigerator. This should all be done the night before you make the chicken.

Brown Glazed Onions

Bring a large part of water to boil. Drop the onions into the boiling water for about 10 seconds. Drain, and run cold water over them. Carefully trim off the top and root portions. Slip off the skins, trying not to disturb the layers. Pierce a cross in the root ends of the onions so they cook more evenly.

Heat 2 tablespoons of butter and 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a skillet. When hot add the onions, rolling them gently in the hot fat for about 10 to 15 minutes, until they are nicely browned. Pour in ½ cup of the brown chicken stock you made and season to taste with salt and pepper. Add another herb bouquet of sprigs of parsley, thyme, rosemary, and a bay leaf. Cover and simmer gently for 40 to 50 minutes, until the onions are tender but have not lost their shape. Set aside. These may be cooked hours in advance.

Chicken

Remove the chicken from the refrigerator, and bring to room temperature. Dry the mushrooms and slice. Heat 2 tablespoons of butter and 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large Dutch oven, add the mushrooms in 3 or 4 batches, until they are nicely browned, about 4 minutes. You may need to add an extra tablespoon of butter and oil. Remove the browned mushrooms to a plate and season to taste with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Cut the chunk bacon into small lardons, about an inch long and 1/4-inch thick, and dry them. Add 2 tablespoons of butter and 1 tablespoon of olive oil to the same Dutch oven, and brown the lardons. They should be well browned, but not crispy. Remove to a side dish and set aside.

In the same Dutch oven, you should have enough fat. If not add a little more butter and oil. When very hot, dry the chicken pieces thoroughly and brown them very well on all sides. They should be deep golden brown when you remove them to a side dish. Discard the browning fat.

Return the chicken and the bacon to the Dutch oven. Cover and cook slowly for 10 minutes, turning the chicken occasionally.

Uncover and pour $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cognac into the pan with the chicken. Avert your face, and ignite the cognac. Shake the casserole back and forth until the flames subside. Add 3 cups of wine and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ -3 cups of the brown chicken stock into the Dutch oven. Also add any liquid from the glazed onions and the mushrooms. There should be enough liquid to just cover the chicken. Stir in the tomato paste, the currant jelly, the mashed garlic, and another herb bouquet of sprigs of parsley, thyme, rosemary, and a bay leaf. Cover and simmer slowly for about 30 to 40 minutes. Remove the chicken to a side dish.

When the liquid has cooled and the fat has risen to the top, skim paper towels across the surface of the broth until it appears fat free. Return the Dutch oven to the heat and boil uncovered, reducing the liquid to about 3 cups. Correct the seasoning, and remove the herb bouquet.

Blend 3 tablespoons of softened butter with 4 tablespoons of flour, making a *beurre manié*. Bring the sauce to the simmer and add just enough of the *beurre manié* to make the sauce thick enough to lightly coat a spoon. Return the chicken to the sauce, and add the mushrooms and the onions. If serving immediately, baste the chicken, mushrooms, and onions with the sauce until all are hot.

If not serving immediately, set aside uncovered where it can wait indefinitely. Just before serving, bring to the simmer, basting the chicken, onions, and mushrooms with the sauce. Then cover and simmer 4 to 5 minutes until everything is hot. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve.