

## Fricassée de Poulet à l'Ancienne

Julia Child "Mastering the Art of French Cooking", Volume I  
Old-Fashioned Chicken Fricassee with  
Wine-Flavored Cream Sauce, Onions, and Mushrooms  
Submitted by Jo Ann Hess

- 2 ½ to 3 pounds of cut-up frying chicken
- 1 thinly sliced onion, carrot, and celery stalk
- 4 tablespoons butter
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon white pepper
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 3 cups boiling white chicken stock, white stock, or canned chicken bouillon
- 1 cup dry white wine or 2/3 cup dry white vermouth
- A small herb bouquet: 2 parsley sprigs, 1/3 bay leaf, and 1/8 teaspoon thyme tied in washed cheesecloth
- 16 to 20 Oignons Glacés à Blanc (White-Braised Onions)
- Champignons à Blanc (Stewed Mushrooms)
- 2 egg yolks
- ½ cup whipping cream
- Drops of lemon juice
- Pinch of nutmeg
- 1 to 2 tablespoons softened butter
- Sprigs of fresh parsley

Dry the chicken thoroughly in a towel.

Cook the onion, carrot, and celery slowly in the butter in a Dutch oven for about 5 minutes, or until they are almost tender but not browned. Push them to one side. Raise the heat slightly, and add the chicken. Turn it every minute for 3 to 4 minutes until the meat has stiffened slightly, without coloring to more than a light golden yellow. Lower the heat, cover, and cook very slowly for 10 minutes, turning the chicken once. It should swell slightly, stiffen more, but not deepen in color.

Sprinkle salt, pepper, and flour on all sides of the chicken, turning and rolling each piece to coat the flour with the cooking butter. Cover and continue cooking slowly for 4 minutes, turning it once. Remove from heat and pour in the boiling liquid, shaking the pot to blend the liquid and flour. Add the wine, the herb bouquet, and more stock, or water, so the liquid just covers the chicken. Bring to the simmer. Taste for seasoning, and salt lightly if necessary.

Cover and maintain at a slow simmer for 25 to 30 minutes. The chicken is done when the drumsticks are tender if pinched and the chicken juices run clear yellow when the meat is pricked with a fork. When done, remove the chicken to a side dish.

While the chicken is cooking, prepare the onions and mushrooms. Add their cooking juices to the chicken cooking sauce in the next step.

Simmer the cooking liquid in the pot for 2 to 3 minutes, skimming off the fat. Then raise heat and boil rapidly, stirring frequently, until the sauce reduces and thickens enough to coat a spoon nicely. Correct seasoning. You should have 2 to 2 1/2 cups.

Blend the egg yolks and cream in a mixing bowl with a wire whisk. Continue beating, and add the hot sauce by small tablespoonfuls until about a cupful has gone in. Beat in the rest of the sauce in a thin stream. Pour the sauce back into the pot, or into an enameled or stainless steel saucepan (do not use aluminum). Set over moderately high heat and, stirring constantly, reach all over the bottom and sides of the pot, until the sauce comes to a boil. Boil for 1 minute, stirring. Correct seasoning, adding drops of lemon juice to taste, and a pinch of nutmeg. Strain the sauce through a fine sieve.

Arrange the chicken, and the onion and mushroom garniture, in the pot. Pour the sauce over it. Set the pot over moderate heat and bring to the simmer. Cover and simmer very slowly for 5 minutes, or until the chicken is hot through, basting it frequently with the sauce.

Off heat and just before serving, tilt pot, add enrichment butter, and baste the chicken with the sauce until the butter has absorbed into it. Serve the chicken from the pot; or arrange it with the onions and mushrooms on a hot platter, surrounded with rice or noodles, and covered with the sauce. Decorate with sprigs of fresh parsley.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

### **Oignons Glacés à Blanc (White-Braised Onions)**

- 18 to 24 peeled white onions about 1 inch in diameter
- 1/2 cup white stock, canned chicken broth, dry white wine, or water
- 2 tablespoons butter
- Salt and pepper to taste
- A small herb bouquet: 2 parsley sprigs, 1/8 teaspoon thyme, and 1/3 bay leaf tied in cheesecloth

If using fresh onions:

Boil water. Gently pour the boiling water onto the onions, and allow it to loosen the skin for a minute. Drain the onions and place them in ice water, so that the onions will not cook thoroughly. Cut the tips off both ends of the onion and remove the skin.

If using frozen onions:

Thaw the onions first and continue with the recipe.

Place the onions in a heavy skillet with the liquid, butter, seasonings, and herb bouquet. Cover and simmer very slowly, rolling the onions in the saucepan from time to time, for 40 to 50 minutes. The onions should not color, and should be perfectly tender yet retain their shape. If all the liquid evaporates during the cooking, add more by spoonfuls as necessary. Remove herb bouquet.

### **Champignons à Blanc (Stewed Mushrooms)**

- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms
- 2/3 cup water
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons butter

Trim and wash the mushrooms. Bring the water, salt, lemon juice, and butter to the oil in a 6-cup saucepan. Add the mushrooms and toss to cover them with the liquid. Cover and boil moderately fast, tossing frequently, for 5 minutes. Set aside until ready to use.