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Chicken Flamenquin ***Flamenquines de Pollo***

Classic **flamenquines** (Andalusian fried pork and serrano ham rolls) tend to be a bit pig-intensive and hefty. Not this updated chicken version, which I tasted in the Andalusian city of Osuna. Normally the rolls are layered with only ham and chopped parsley and garlic, but here they are made brighter and moister by the addition of piquillo peppers and luscious melting cheese. Sliced, the rolls turn into delicious, colorful pinwheels that can be served as a tapa or a light luncheon dish.

4 thinly sliced skinless, boneless chicken breast halves (scaloppine-cut, about 1 pound total)
2 tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
3 fat garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
Coarse salt (kosher or sea)
4 wide, thin slices Serrano ham or prosciutto (1 to 2 ounces)
4 piquillo peppers (from a can or jar), split and opened like a book,
 or 2 roasted red bell peppers, cut in half
4 logs easy-melting cheese, such as Fontina, each about 3 inches long by 1 inch wide by 1/2 inch thick
About 1 cup dry white bread crumbs, or more if needed
1 large egg, beaten in a shallow bowl
Olive oil, for frying

1. Place a chicken scaloppini between two pieces of waxed paper or in a large, sturdy zipper-top bag and pound it with a kitchen mallet or heavy skillet until very thin, taking care not to tear the meat. Repeat with the remaining cutlets.
2. Place the parsley and garlic on a chopping board and, using a chef's knife, finely mince them together.
3. Place a pounded chicken scaloppine on a work surface and lightly sprinkle it with salt. Top with a slice of ham, trimming it to fit. Sprinkle some of the parsley mixture over the ham, then top with a piquillo pepper, trimming it to fit if necessary. Place a log of cheese across the shortest end of the cutlet, about 1 inch from the edge. Starting at this end, roll the scaloppini into a compact roll. Secure the end with a toothpick. Repeat with the remaining chicken.
4. Place the bread crumbs in a shallow bowl. Dip the chicken rolls in the beaten egg, then roll them in the bread crumbs. Make sure to thoroughly bread the short ends of the rolls, so the cheese can't leak out.

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5. Line a large plate with a double layer of paper towels. Pour olive oil to a depth of 3/4 inch in a medium-size skillet and heat over medium-high heat to 360°F; when hot, a piece of bread placed in the oil will sizzle on contact. Fry the chicken rolls until golden brown and cooked through on all sides, 7 to 8 minutes total, adjusting the heat so that the rolls don't burn. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the rolls to the paper towels to drain. When just cool enough to handle, transfer the rolls to a cutting board and cut them crosswise into thick slices. Serve at once.

Serves 6 to 8 as a tapa, 4 as a light main course.