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Picnic Fried Chicken

Makes 12 pieces

Making delicious, crispy, and juicy fried chicken at home is easier than you think! The secret to the lip-smacking results is a double coating that encases the chicken. Dressed in an array of spices, flour, and buttermilk, the resulting crispy, golden crust becomes irresistible! Each bite of chicken is extra flavorful and juicy, a perfect complement to the crispy fried crust.

Chicken:

6 chicken legs, excess skin and fat trimmed off
6 chicken thighs, excess skin and fat trimmed off

Spice Mixture:

1 tablespoon sweet paprika
1 tablespoon smoky paprika
1 tablespoon oregano
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon cayenne
1/2 teaspoon dried mustard
1 tablespoon Kosher salt
2 tablespoons black pepper

Dredging Ingredients:

2 egg whites
2 cups buttermilk
3 cups all-purpose flour

Vegetable oil for frying

Directions:

1. Mix all of the spices together in a small bowl.
2. Sprinkle the chicken with half of the spice mixture and let it set at room temperature for 30 minutes.
3. Set up a dredging station using two shallow bowls or deep plates. In the first bowl, place the flour and the remaining half of the spice mix. In another bowl, whisk together the egg whites and the buttermilk until evenly mixed.
4. Dip the spiced chicken into the buttermilk mixture, then place into the flour; use a spoon to cover the pieces with flour. Dip the floured chicken back into the buttermilk for a second time, and then into the flour again until coated. Shake off any excess flour.
5. Place the double-coated chicken on a cooling rack that is placed on a baking sheet, and let the coating dry out for about 10 minutes while preparing the oil for frying.
6. In a large Dutch oven pot or other deep pot, pour two inches of vegetable oil, and heat the oil to 350 degrees F. A thermometer specifically for deep-frying is most helpful in ensuring the right temperature.

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7. Carefully place chicken pieces in the hot oil taking care not to crowd the pot. This helps the temperature to stay hot and more consistent. As batches of chicken are fried, use a "holding environment" to keep the chicken hot and crispy. To prepare a holding environment for the cooked chicken, preheat the oven to 350 degrees F, and place a cooling rack on a baking sheet ready to accept each batch.

8. Using long tongs, fry the chicken in the hot oil. In order to keep the crispy coating intact, let the chicken fry for about 10 minutes before turning for the first time. Turn the chicken to each side until the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 degrees F and is evenly golden brown and crispy all over.

9. Sprinkle the hot chicken with Kosher salt. Place on the prepared rack in the hot oven. Serve immediately once all of the frying is completed.