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Coq au Vin - Chicken in Wine

Serves 4 - 6

Coq Au Vin or "rooster in wine" is a traditional French peasant stew that became popular thanks to Julia Child's encouragement. While the original recipe might turn a tough old rooster into something delicious, it's equally delightful with chicken thighs and or legs. Red wine, mushrooms, bacon, onions, and thyme all infuse wonderful flavors into this ultimate comfort food dish. A slow braising technique coaxes a mélange of easy ingredients into a dance of gustatory perfection!

Ingredients:

1/2 lb bacon, diced	3 tablespoons flour
4 drumsticks, skin on and bone-in	2 tablespoons tomato paste
4 chicken thighs, skin on and bone-in	1 tablespoon brandy
1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt	2 cups red wine (a good red wine like a pinot noir)
1/2 teaspoon fresh ground pepper	1 cup chicken broth
2 tablespoons olive oil	8-10 sprigs of fresh thyme
1 onion, diced	2 tablespoons butter
2 cloves garlic, minced	1/2 lb frozen small pearl onions
4-5 large carrots, cut into 1-inch diagonal pieces	8 oz cremini mushrooms, sliced
	Chopped parsley, for garnish

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.
2. Prepare the onions, garlic, and carrots.
3. In a large Dutch oven fry the bacon until crisp. Remove the bacon, and drain on a paper towel-lined plate.
4. Remove most of the bacon fat, leaving about 3-4 tablespoons in the Dutch oven.
5. Sprinkle the chicken pieces with Kosher salt and pepper. Sear the chicken legs and thighs on all sides in the Dutch oven until the skin is a crispy golden brown, then remove the chicken pieces.
6. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil to the pot and sauté the diced onions until softened and translucent.
7. Add the garlic and carrots to the onion and sauté for a few more minutes until the garlic is fragrant.
8. Dust the vegetables with 3 tablespoons of flour and stir until coated. Cook for about 2 minutes.
9. Add the tomato paste and cook until fragrant, then add the brandy to the mixture. Cook the brandy down for a minute, then continue to deglaze the pan with the red wine. Add the chicken broth and stir until combined. Add the seared chicken pieces back to the pot with the cooked bacon, and the sprigs of thyme.
10. Cover the pot and place in the oven. Bake for 20-40 minutes or until the chicken is tender and cooked to 165 degrees F.
11. While the chicken is baking, prepare the mashed potatoes.
12. While the chicken bakes, prepare the pearl onions. In a skillet, sauté the pearl onions in two tablespoons butter until they are lightly golden brown on all sides.
13. Then, sauté the mushrooms in the same skillet, adding olive oil as needed, and cook until browned.
14. Add the cooked pearl onions and mushrooms to the Dutch oven. Carefully taste and season with additional salt and pepper, as needed. If needed, continue to simmer on the stovetop to thicken the sauce. The sauce will also thicken more as it cools.
15. Serve the Coq au Vin on a bed of mashed potatoes (or egg noodles or cauliflower rice), and garnish with fresh parsley.