

Chicken in Red Wine - A hint of orange

This take on 'coq au vin' is one we developed when staying in a Gîte in the French Pyrenees - we didn't have any recipe books but we did have a surfeit of half-finished bottles of red wine. The flavours develop if the dish is made a day or a few hours before and then reheated.

For four people:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1.5 kg chicken pieces, bone in
- 200g quality smoky bacon, cubed
- 1 tbsp butter
- 2 large onions sliced in half-moons
- 3 large cloves garlic crushed
- 200g button mushrooms
- 2 bay leaves
- several sprigs thyme
- 200 g tomato paste
- 3 or 4 large slivers orange rind
- salt and pepper
- 500 ml medium strength red wine
- chopped parsley for garnish



Method:

Put the casserole or saucepan on the heat, and add the olive oil. Fry the chicken pieces over medium heat until browned on both sides. Remove chicken and pour off excess fat. Fry the bacon in the casserole until browned slightly. Remove.

Add butter and fry the onions over medium heat to brown slightly. Add the garlic and combine.

Return chicken and bacon. Add mushrooms (whole or sliced), bay leaves and thyme, tomato paste, orange rind and salt and pepper to taste and stir through over medium heat. Pour in enough red wine to barely cover the chicken.

Bring to medium simmer then cover and put on low simmer (or low oven, 150°C) for an hour or so. Carefully stir through once or twice. The sauce should thicken slightly.

Serve:

Garnish with parsley and serve as a main course with mash, pasta, steamed vegetables or polenta, with a green salad or just straight with great bread.

Equipment:

Large solid casserole or saucepan with a lid.

Difficulty and Time:

Moderately difficult (3/5). 30 minutes preparation, 60 minutes cooking. Better cooked the day before.

Notes and variations:

- Use a vegetable peeler for the orange rind and a knife to remove excess white pith.
- The sauce is quite rich and any leftovers can be used for pasta or as a ragout base.