

Fried Chicken

Serves about 3 people

While I use a lot of cayenne in this recipe, it's got a surprisingly mild kick. I definitely wouldn't characterize it as spicy.

For the brine:

1 (3- to 4-lb) whole chicken, cut into 8 pieces
2 cups buttermilk
1 tablespoon hot sauce (I prefer Tabasco)
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground red "cayenne" pepper
1 teaspoon ground black pepper

For the seasoned flour:

1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
1 tablespoon ground red "cayenne" pepper
2 teaspoons garlic powder
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper

For frying:

1 (16-ounce) container Crisco vegetable shortening
6 tablespoons unsalted butter

In a large bowl, whisk together the buttermilk, Tabasco, salt, cayenne, and ground black pepper. Place the chicken pieces in a re-sealable plastic bag or large bowl and pour the buttermilk mixture over them. Toss to coat. Seal the bag or cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate the chicken in the brine for at least 4 and preferably 6 hours.

Whisk together the flour, cayenne, garlic powder, salt, and pepper in a pie plate. Place several paper towels on a dinner plate.

Place the chicken pieces in a colander and let them drain. Dredge the chicken pieces in the flour mixture and then set aside.

This recipe came from *Minced* at www.mincedblog.com.

In a large high-sided skillet, heat the vegetable shortening and unsalted butter to 350 degrees. Dredge the chicken pieces again and then place the pieces in the skillet, skin side down. Place the large pieces, such as the breasts and thighs, in the hot spots of the skillet.

Adjust the heat as needed; when the chicken pieces are first added the oil temperature will drop and you may need to increase the heat to bring it up again. When frying the chicken, try to keep the oil temperature around 325 degrees.

Fry for 10 minutes then carefully turn the chicken pieces over and fry for another 8 to 10 minutes or until the thickest parts of the meat register 165 degrees. Remove the chicken pieces from the skillet and set them on paper towels. Enjoy!