

Cornflake-Crusted Country Fried Chicken

This is a very crispy, crunchy, fried chicken which is sweet, savory, and has a little underlying snap. One could easily spike the buttermilk with cayenne to add more but in the interest of wide appeal was omitted here. It's a very down-home provincial style meal which should be quite satisfying for the whole family.

Ingredients:

- 6 chicken drumsticks
- 1 quart buttermilk
- 2 cups corn flake cereal
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1 tablespoon cracked black pepper
- 1 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 0.5 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon celery seed
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

Directions:

Rinse drumsticks in water and shake off. Pour buttermilk in large bowl and stir in the white pepper and celery seed. Gently lower in each drumstick so all are submerged. Cover with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator to soak for 4-24 hours.

After soak, place the remaining spices and flour in a large bowl and whisk together until incorporated. Crush corn flakes in another large bowl to a coarse consistency. In a deep-fryer or Dutch oven, fill halfway with peanut or canola oil (DO NOT use olive oil or, due to its low smoke point, your chicken will come out bitter). Heat to 350F measuring with a quality mechanical or, preferably, a digital food thermometer. You can also use a cast iron skillet with high sides.

Take each drumstick out of buttermilk and gently shake off excess. Dredge each in the flour and spice mix, coating thoroughly. Lightly douse in buttermilk again, then dredge in crushed corn flakes being sure to coat very thoroughly. After being fully dredged place each chicken on a wire rack with a baking sheet underneath to catch drips. Repeat for all drumsticks. Let all the chicken rest for at least 10 minutes. When ready to cook, place up to 3 of the drumsticks in the oil to ensure the oil temperature does not fall below 300F. The oil should stay between 300-325F. Cook until golden brown all over, rolling diligently, with an internal temperature of 160-165F. Use a second thermometer or a second probe and channel on the one monitoring the oil temperature. This should

take around 15 minutes. Let the oil return to 350F before starting the next batch. Put the fried chicken on another baking rack with a baking sheet under it into a preheated 200F oven to stay warm while the next batch(es) are cooking.

Pair with:

Roasted corn and cherry tomatoes sautéed with edamame and baby carrots.

Spear bottom of corn cob with barbecue fork. Use Brule torch (or a regular propane blowtorch) to fire-roast corn (can also do over gas stove in a pinch), then cut corn off cob. Alternatively use frozen corn kernels thawed to room temperature and place on a baking sheet with the cherry tomatoes. Place on the highest oven rack under a hot broiler and let roast for up 5 minutes or until slightly charred. Carefully quarter the tomatoes - the charred skin will be very soft. Heat a pan on medium heat and melt 1 tablespoon unsalted butter. After butter is melted, add raw edamame with baby carrots then sauté until edamame and carrots soften. Add the corn and tomatoes, dust with cumin, dried sage, salt, and freshly-ground black pepper, and sauté for another 2-3 minutes.

Sprinkle with dill and fresh coarsely-chopped parsley after plating.

Serve with a pale ale, a dry Riesling, your favorite Rose'/Blush, a Lambrusco, a Prosecco, or a Viognier.

© 2016 - Eric N. Valor