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Chicken Ragout, Much Lighter Than a Stew

By Susie Iventosch



Pappardelle Pasta with Chicken Ragout Photo
Susie Iventosch

¼ cup olive oil, divided
 2 carrots, cut into ½-inch pieces
 2 stalks of celery, cut into ½-inch pieces
 1 large yellow onion, coarsely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 4 sprigs of thyme, stripped of stem
 2 sprigs of rosemary, stripped of stem and chopped
 3 sage leaves, chopped
 ¼ cup parsley, chopped (reserve some for garnish)
 ¼ cup tomato paste
 1 cup dry white wine (can use red wine)
 1 ½ cups water
 16 ounces pappardelle pasta
 ½ cup fresh-grated Parmesan

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 300F.

In a large skillet or Dutch oven, heat 2 tablespoons oil and brown chicken on both sides. Remove to a plate.

In the same pan, add a little more oil and cook onions, garlic, celery, carrots and herbs over medium heat, until beginning to brown and getting a little bit caramelized. Add tomato paste and mix until dissolved. Then add the wine and water and stir well, until integrated.

Place chicken back in pot, press down into broth and veggies and cover with a tight-fitting lid. Bake, covered, for approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until chicken is cooked tender and falling off the bone. Remove from oven and cool to room temperature.

This is the time of year when the desire for comfort foods really starts to surface. That is probably why my son, who is a huge seafood fan, opted for pasta instead of lobster on his first-ever trip to Boston last week. He was so enthralled with the dish, that he sent an email to tell me all about this orecchiette pasta with hen ragout.

"Holy cow, it was amazing!!! I mean, really, really amazing!" he raved. And, then he went on to ask if I knew how to make a ragout. Well, the short answer is yes, but normally I think of tomatoes and veggies, along with some beef for a hearty, stew-like meal. This chicken ragout is lighter than a beef ragout, and calls for carrots, celery and onions, along with herbs, wine and chicken. It is delicious and perfect to serve over pasta. We chose pappardelle pasta, because it holds up so well to the pureed sauce and chunks of chicken.

INGREDIENTS

1 whole, fryer (or roaster) chicken, quartered into leg/thigh and breast/wing parts (remove skin if you prefer skinless)

Sea salt and fresh ground pepper

Pull the meat from the bones into large and small pieces and discard bones and fat. Set chicken aside. Meanwhile, puree braising veggies along with all the broth that is left in a food processor. This may take several batches, depending on the size of the processor. Return pureed sauce to a pot or pan and season to taste with salt and pepper. Add meat and heat until warm. Serve over cooked pasta and garnish with fresh grated Parmesan and a sprig of parsley.

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