



Ingredients

Serves 6

For the chicken

- 6 Chicken thighs, skin on
- Salt and black pepper
- Plain flour
- 150g Unsalted butter
- 2 Onions, peeled and sliced
- 1 Leek, white part only, cleaned and sliced
- 3 Cloves of garlic, peeled and bashed with the flat part of a knife or by hand
- 300g Palo Cortado or Amontillado sherry
- 500g White chicken stock
- 250g Double cream
- 10 Baby onions, peeled and halved
- Pinch of sugar
- 8 Sprigs of thyme, leaves picked
- 150g Button mushrooms, quartered

To finish and serve

- 100g Pancetta lardons
- 10g Parmesan cheese, finely grated
- 10g Gruyère cheese, finely grated
- 5g Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp White truffle oil
- Chives, tarragon and parsley

Heston Blumenthal at Home

Braised chicken with sherry and cream

Normally white wine would be used in a cream sauce for chicken, but here I have used sherry. It adds deep aromatic notes to what is basically a very simple dish. If you have time, you could brine the chicken thighs in an 8 per cent brine (80g salt per 1kg water) for 4–6 hours first – this will make the texture and flavour even better.

Season the chicken thighs with salt and freshly ground pepper, and dust with a little flour. Melt 30g of the butter in a casserole dish and sear the chicken until golden brown. Remove the chicken from the pan and set aside. Add the onions, leek and garlic to the pan, and cook until translucent (approximately 15 minutes). Pre-heat the oven to 100°C.

Pour the sherry into the onion pan and bring up to the boil. Set alight. When the flames have died away, reduce the heat, add the chicken stock and cream, and simmer for 20 minutes.

Return the chicken to the pan and bring to a simmer. Cover the casserole dish and place in the pre-heated oven for 45 minutes or until the chicken is completely cooked. Allow the chicken to cool in the liquid.

Once cool, remove the chicken from the pan. Strain the sauce through a fine sieve and discard the vegetables. Place the sauce back in the casserole over a high heat and boil to reduce by half, skimming off any impurities that rise to the surface.

In the meantime, in a frying pan, melt half of the remaining butter until foaming. Sprinkle the baby onions with salt, freshly ground pepper, a pinch of sugar and the thyme leaves, and brown on the flat side, then remove.

Add the remaining butter to the pan and caramelize the mushrooms to a golden colour, seasoning during the process (approximately 15–20 minutes).

Add the onions and the mushrooms to the casserole with the reduced sauce, and simmer for 2 minutes.

Wipe the frying pan and, over a medium-high heat, render the fat out of the lardons until they are soft (approximately 10 minutes). Remove the lardons and drain on kitchen paper.

To serve, add the Parmesan, Gruyère, mustard and truffle oil to the casserole. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper.

Add the chicken thighs, stir, and place over a medium heat for 10 minutes to warm them through.

Garnish with the lardons and freshly chopped herbs.



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