

CHICKEN CACCIATORE

Serves 6 to 8, depending on serving size.
By Dennis W. Viau; my own original recipe.

The word *cacciatore* is Italian for hunter. This food, then, is chicken in the hunter style. It comes from a time when men would hunt game birds and bring them home to cook in a sauce for dinner. This meal is traditionally made with whole chicken pieces cooked on the bone. I make it boneless for easy eating and to use the bones and trim to make stock.



Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil for frying
1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
10 fresh sage leaves; chopped
2 to 3 cloves garlic; minced
½ cup (120ml) dry red wine
1 or 2 bay leaves
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh Italian (flat leaf) parsley
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1½ cups (350ml) chicken stock, preferably homemade
1 chicken (2½ to 3 pounds/1.1 to 1.4kg) boneless chicken pieces
5 to 6 mushrooms (110g); chopped
2 stalks celery (110g); chopped
½ large onion (170g); chopped
2 to 3 fresh Roma tomatoes; peeled, seeded, and chopped
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Pinch of hot red pepper flakes (optional)
Rice or noodles, enough for 6 to 8 servings

Directions:

Coarsely chop the rosemary and sage. Heat the olive oil in a large pot and add the herbs just chopped. Sauté gently to flavor the oil, 1 to 2 minutes.

Lower the heat and add the garlic, wine, bay leaf, basil, and parsley. Simmer to reduce the liquid by about half. Add the tomato paste and about ½ cup (120ml) of stock. Cover and let simmer over low heat about 20 minutes, adding ½ cup of stock at 5-minute intervals until all the stock is used.

While the sauce is cooking, cut up the boneless chicken pieces into bite-sized chunks, about ½ inch (2cm) in size. Add to the sauce with the mushrooms, celery, onion, and Roma tomatoes. Cook until the chicken is just cooked through, about 6 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, cook rice or pasta as desired. Plate the pasta or rice and spoon the chicken cacciatore over the top. Garnish with chopped parsley or basil, if desired. Serve immediately.

The step-by-step photos were removed. See the video for the preparation.