CHICKEN and DUMPLINGS

Serves 6.
By Dennis W. Viau; inspired by my mother’s recipe.

I grew up with this food. My mother made it occasionally and it was always delicious. The problem is that there are many different variations named “dumplings,” from looking like noodles to filled pot stickers. I made the dumplings my mother made, with one exception: I used buttermilk.

Ingredients:
For the Chicken:
One 5½ pound (2½kg) chicken, whole or in pieces
2 cups (475ml) chicken stock, preferably homemade

For the Dumplings:
1 large egg
¼ cup (118ml) buttermilk
3 tablespoons butter, room temperature or melted
1 cup (5 ounces/172g) all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
Optional: freshly ground black pepper
½ teaspoon baking soda
3 tablespoons flour

Directions:
If the chicken is whole, section it into pieces (drumsticks, thighs, wings, breasts, and back), leaving the bones in place. Cook 30 to 45 minutes in the stock until thoroughly cooked. (I used a pressure cooker, which cooks the meat in 20 to 30 minutes). Let cool until warm and then remove the meat, discarding the skin and the bones. Refrigerate the stock, preferably overnight, and then skim off the fat.

Melt the skinned stock in a heavy pot and add the boneless chicken. Bring the stock to a boil and reduce the heatke to maintain a slow simmer.

While the stock is melting: In a medium bowl combine the egg and buttermilk and mix well with a whisk. Add the butter and whisk, breaking the butter up into small beads. In a large bowl, combine the flour, salt, (optional pepper), and baking soda, blending thoroughly. Add the buttermilk mixture to the flour mixture and stir only until combined.

Spoon dollops of dumpling batter, dividing into six portions, onto the simmering liquid. Place the cover on the pot and let the dumplings steam 10 minutes without removing the lid. Meanwhile, mix 3 tablespoons of flour into ½ cup cool water to make a slurry.

Remove the cover and transfer the dumplings to a bowl. Stir the slurry into the stock and raise the heat to bring to a boil to thicken. Reduce the heat and let the liquid simmer for 2 to 3 minutes to cook the flour in the slurry, eliminating any raw flour flavor. Then portion the cooked chicken and stock into bowls. Place a dumpling in each bowl and serve.

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