

FINGER LICKIN' CHICKEN

Makes as much as you want.

By Dennis W. Viau; modified from several recipes.

I don't know if this is an urban myth or not, but supposedly someone got their hands on a sample of the coating mix used by Kentucky Fried Chicken and paid a laboratory \$5,000 to determine the ingredients. Only four ingredients were found: flour, salt, pepper, and monosodium glutamate (MSG). The story goes back even further to say that the Colonel did use 11 herbs and spices in his original recipe, but after the restaurant chain was sold, and sold again, the owners discarded the original recipe and went with a cheaper mix to increase profits, and that's how the coating mix ended up with only four ingredients. WikiAnswers says: "Ron Douglas, a former JP Morgan employee who tries to reverse engineer recipes from chain restaurants, thinks he can create a KFC replica so good that no one will be able to tell the difference." Todd Wilbur included a formula in his book, *A Treasury of Top Secret Recipes*. The recipe below is a combination of all these ideas. I've made it many times and I think it's delicious. It's easy, too.



Ingredients:

The supposed 11 herbs and spices:

- 1 teaspoon ground oregano
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground sage
- 1 teaspoon dried basil; ground
- 1 teaspoon dried marjoram; ground
- 2 teaspoons pepper
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon MSG (monosodium glutamate, found as *Accent* in stores)

4 cups all-purpose flour

For the chicken:

Use as many pieces as you need to feed your guests. I prefer to use boneless thighs, cut in thirds.

For the coating:

- 1 egg; beaten well (more as needed for a large batch)
- ½ cup milk (more as needed for a large batch), or buttermilk, which is even better

For the frying:

- 1½ (about) cups of oil

Directions:

I mix up the coating ingredients in a large storage container and store it in the cupboard for whenever I feel like making fried chicken.

Combine the egg and milk in a shallow bowl. Pour some coating mix in another bowl. Dip the chicken in the dry mix, coating well, then in the egg mixture, and then in the dry mix again. Shake off any excess coating.



Fry in hot oil (350°F / 175°C) until golden brown, turning the pieces over about halfway through the cooking, 5 minutes or longer per side. The cooking time will depend on the thickness and temperature of your chicken. Cold chicken and/or whole pieces will require a longer cooking time. Drain on paper towels.

Serve hot. Can be served with a dipping sauce, such as a honey-mustard sauce.

STEP-BY-STEP

1



Surprisingly, I had all of the herbs and spices in my spice box in the cupboard. If some of these jars look a little old, it is because they *are* old. I am not ashamed to admit I still have some spices beyond their expiration date. That square hunk of stuff in the plastic bag is a mass of onion powder that stuck together. I use a microplane grater to shave off what I need when I need it.

2



I have an electric coffee mill that I only use for grinding spices. When there is only a small amount to grind, as in the basil, I sometimes use my mortar and pestle.

3



After grinding spice, whether in the coffee mill or with mortar and pestle, I use a small sieve to sift out the stems and larger pieces.

4



After all the measuring and grinding and sifting and grating and mixing, here is my spice mix. This gets combined with the flour.

5



I store my chicken coating mix in a large plastic container. I mix up a lot of it so that it will be ready to use whenever I want to make Finger Lickin' Chicken.

6



My favorite piece of the chicken is the thigh. I am using boneless, skinless thighs that I filleted myself. I buy chicken in the warehouse store where it is currently only 99¢ per pound, which is much less expensive than buying the pieces at the grocery store. If I remember correctly, boneless, skinless chicken thighs in the grocery store were \$4.79 per pound for the same brand of chicken. I cut the thighs in thirds lengthwise. They'll be easy to eat with the fingers, which seems like the best way to eat fried chicken.

7



I have my dry coating mix in a shallow bowl and my egg-and-milk mixture in another bowl. My container of coating mix stands at the ready nearby. I'll add more to the bowl before I'm done frying all the chicken pieces. When I'm cooking a lot of chicken, such as for a picnic, I keep adding to the bowls as needed until everything is cooked.

When I made this recipe again many months later, I had buttermilk in the refrigerator. I decided to experiment with it and the result was a more delicious fried chicken.

8



Heat oil to 350°F (175°C). I use a digital thermometer with a probe that I insert into the oil. The temperature doesn't need to be exact. The oil needs to be hot enough to fry the chicken without soaking into the meat. Note: This is NOT the intended use of a digital thermometer and thus I replace mine often.

9



Fry the chicken a few pieces at a time. Avoid crowding the pan. Cook until golden brown on the outside and thoroughly cooked on the inside.

10



Arrange some paper towels on a plate and place the cooked chicken pieces on the towels to drain. Use tongs or a slotted spoon to carefully remove the chicken from the hot oil.



Arrange on a serving platter and serve immediately. This is chicken to be eaten with the fingers. Have plenty of sturdy napkins available. This is boneless chicken, very easy to eat at a picnic or backyard barbeque.

Conclusion:

Although I sometimes serve this chicken with a dipping sauce on the side (see below), I like it well enough to eat it without any dipping sauce.

Honey-Mustard Dipping Sauce:

1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

1½ tablespoons honey

¼ cup plain yoghurt

Combine the ingredients in a bowl and spoon into small dipping bowls to be set alongside each plate.