

CHICKEN CASSOULET

Cassoulet is a classic stew dish from France consisting of white beans and various meats (such as sausages, pork and preserved duck or goose). A *cassoulet* is covered and cooked very slowly to harmonize the flavors.



Ingredients

4 chicken legs and thighs
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 celery stalk, chopped
2 carrots, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced

2 cups chicken stock
2 cups cooked Northern white beans
2 teaspoons fresh rosemary
2 teaspoons fresh thyme
Zest of 1 lemon and its juice
1 teaspoon hot sauce
1 tablespoon tomato sauce or ketchup

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Rinse and dry the chicken well and season with salt and pepper.
3. Heat a medium casserole dish to medium-high heat; add the chicken, skin side down. Brown the chicken on both sides, and then remove to a plate.
4. Add 1 tablespoon of olive oil, chopped onions, carrots and celery. Stir, after two minutes, a garlic and herbs, then sauté until soft, about 3 minutes.
5. Deglaze the pan with chicken stock and reduce by half.
6. Stir in the beans. Add the chicken, then the remainder of the chicken stock, lemon zest and juice, hot sauce or ketchup. Cover and bake in the oven for 20 minutes.

For serving the cassoulet, open the lid and top with a savory favorite such as sliced tomatoes, olives and fresh herbs; or Olive Oil and Garlic Bread Crumbs. Return to the oven and bake, uncovered, 15 minutes longer. For fun, crisp up some bacon at the beginning and use the fat instead of some of the olive oil. Also change the vegetables used, in the fall add dices of fennel, sweet potatoes, parsnips, or rutabaga. How about during the last 5 minutes of cooking, add 2 cups of fresh spinach or chopped Swiss chard?

Makes about 4 servings

Prep time: 15 minutes
Cooking Time: 45 minutes