



Montalcino Chicken with Figs and Buttered Gnocchi with Pancetta and Nutmeg

Recipe courtesy Rachael Ray

Recipe Summary

Difficulty: Easy

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

Yield: 4 servings

User Rating: ★★★★★

Montalcino is the city I married in. I will make this dish for John every September 24, for our wedding anniversary. The way to anyone's heart, forever and ever, is through their stomach! THIS is NOT your average chicken dinner!

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, 4 turns of the pan
1/3 pound thick-cut (1/4-inch) pancetta, cut into sticks
2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken, breasts and thighs combined, cut into large chunks
Salt and pepper
Flour, for dredging
1 large onion, thinly sliced
4 cloves garlic, crushed
14-16 dried figs, halved (look for plump, tender dried fig varieties in bulk section of market.)
1/3 bottle dry red wine, eyeball it (recommended: Rosso di Montalcino)
1 to 1 1/2 cups chicken stock
1/4 cup, a generous handful, chopped flat-leaf parsley
1 lemon, zested
1 tablespoon chopped thyme, 4 sprigs
1 package, 12 to 16 ounces fresh or frozen store bought gnocchi (potato pasta)
3 tablespoons butter
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg, eyeball it
2 to 3 tablespoons chopped chives, 10 blades

** This dish uses Rosso di Montalcino wine (an affordable, younger version of Brunello -- I call it "Baby Brunello") but you can substitute any dry red wine you like.

Heat a deep skillet over medium high heat. Add extra-virgin olive oil, 4 turns of the pan, and the cut pancetta. Brown the pancetta, 3 to 4 minutes then remove with a slotted spoon and reserve.

Place a pot of water on the stove to boil for the gnocchi.

While pancetta browns, season the chicken chunks with salt and pepper and dredge in a little flour then add to the hot pan. Brown the pieces a few minutes on each side over high heat, then scoot the meat to the edges of the pan and add the onions, garlic and chopped figs. Saute 5 minutes, combine chicken with onions and figs then add the wine and cook it down 5 minutes or so until only about 1/3 cup remains. Add chicken stock, parsley, lemon zest and thyme to the chicken and stir to combine. Reduce heat to simmer cook another 10 minutes, while you make the gnocchi.

Add salt and gnocchi to boiling water and cook to package directions, drain, 4 minutes for fresh gnocchi, 6 minutes for frozen. Heat a medium nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Melt butter and brown it. Drain gnocchi and add to skillet. Raise heat to medium-high and lightly brown the dumplings. Season gnocchi with salt, pepper and nutmeg, turn to coat and add chives, toss and remove from heat.

Adjust the seasonings on the chicken with figs. If you would like a little more sauce, shake another half cup of stock into the pan. Serve the chicken and figs in shallow dishes, the gnocchi piled in the center of the bowl on top of the chicken. Garnish with crisp pancetta sticks.

