

Dirty Fried Chicken

Serves 4

by Edward Lee from Fine Cooking
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This Korean-inspired fried chicken is poached in a vinegar brine before frying. The vinegar tenderizes the meat, while the parcooking allow for frying at a really high temperature without leaving the inside undercooked. The result is an exceedingly crisp exterior surrounding perfectly tender, flavorful meat. Because it's so crisp, it can handle a slathering of hot and sweet sauce and still crackle when you bite into it. It's impossible to eat without making a mess of yourself, hence the name.

For poaching

2-1/2 cups distilled white vinegar
1/4 cup soy sauce
4 dried bay leaves
3 medium cloves garlic, smashed
1-1/2 tsp. whole black peppercorns
1 tsp. granulated sugar
2 to 3 lb. bone-in chicken drumsticks and thighs
Kosher salt

For the sauce

6 Tbs. gochujang
3 Tbs. apple juice
2 tsp. Asian sesame oil
2 tsp. distilled white vinegar
1-1/2 tsp. honey
1-1/2 tsp. soy sauce

TIP:

Gochujang, a fermented hot chile and soybean paste, makes a sauce that's Buffalo-ish but by way of Korea.

For dredging and frying

4-1/2 oz. (1 cup) all-purpose flour
1 tsp. kosher salt
1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
2 cups buttermilk
1 quart peanut oil

Poach the chicken

In a 4-quart saucepan, bring 1-1/2 cups water, the vinegar, soy sauce, bay leaves, garlic cloves, peppercorns, and sugar to a simmer over medium heat. Simmer for 5 minutes, then reduce the heat to low.

Season the chicken generously with salt. Add the chicken to the simmering broth, partially cover the pan, and poach for 15 minutes, turning the pieces over midway (it's important that the liquid never get hotter than a very gentle simmer). Turn off the heat and let the chicken rest in the broth for 20 minutes. Transfer the chicken pieces to a paper-towel-lined plate and pat the pieces dry.

Make the sauce

Whisk the sauce ingredients together in a medium bowl; set aside.

Dredge and fry the chicken

Whisk the flour, salt, and pepper together in a medium bowl. Pour the buttermilk into a separate bowl. Dip each piece of chicken in the buttermilk, lift out, and let the excess buttermilk drip off. Dredge the chicken in the flour so that each piece is evenly coated. Transfer to a large plate and set aside while you heat the oil.

Fit a 12-inch cast-iron or other heavy-duty skillet with a deep-fry thermometer and add enough oil to fill the skillet halfway; heat the oil over medium high to 365°F. Set a wire rack on a paper-towel-lined rimmed baking sheet.

Working in batches, fry the chicken, turning it over every minute or two and adjusting the heat as needed to maintain 365°F until an instant-read thermometer registers 165°F in the thickest part of each piece, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer the chicken to the rack. Liberally brush the fried chicken with the sauce and serve with more sauce on the side.

nutrition information (per serving):

Calories (kcal): 510; Fat (g): fat g 28; Fat Calories (kcal): 250; Saturated Fat (g): sat fat g 6; Protein (g): protein g 32; Monounsaturated Fat (g): 11; Carbohydrates (g): carbs g 32; Polyunsaturated Fat (g): 8; Sodium (mg): sodium mg 1360; Cholesterol (mg): cholesterol mg 150; Fiber (g): fiber g 2;



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