

CHICKEN WITH WHITE WINE-MUSHROOM SAUCE

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This rustic dish has been a cooking class favorite, and is one of mine, as well. I use coconut milk instead of heavy cream, which adds a unique richness to the sauce, and thyme to increase the aromatics. Half & half or oat milk are also nice choices.

The thickness of the sauce will vary depending on the coconut milk or other creamy ingredient used. If a thicker sauce is desired, add cornstarch mixed with cold water.

This dish comes together fairly easily and presents like something quite special. It can be prepared a day ahead and gently reheated prior to serving. Serve it with a rice pilaf or parsnip-potato mash along with Brussels sprouts, roasted squash, or sauteed asparagus or green beans.

Makes: 3 – 4 servings

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons olive or avocado oil
3 – 3 1/2 pounds boneless chicken thighs (or about 4 pounds bone-in thighs)
Kosher salt and ground black pepper
1/2 small onion, minced (or 1 large shallot, minced)
8 ounces sliced mushrooms – button, cremini, or baby bella
1 large clove of garlic, minced
1/4 cup Cognac, brandy, dry sherry or apple cider
1 cup white wine – any dry variety
1 1/2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves or 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1/3 cup canned coconut milk (full fat; or half & half, or oat milk)

optional for thickening sauce – 1 teaspoon cornstarch + 2 teaspoons cold water stirred together until smooth and well mixed

chopped fresh parsley, for garnish if desired

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the chicken and sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Brown slightly, about 4 – 6 minutes per side. Transfer browned chicken to a platter.
2. In the same skillet, add the onion and mushrooms, and sauté until just softening, about 2 – 3 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds more, until fragrant. Remove the pan from the heat (especially an open flame) and carefully add the Cognac (or other choice) to the pan; return

pan to the heat and allow the liquid to loosen the brown bits from the bottom for a few seconds. Scrape the brown bits from the bottom of the pan and incorporate into the other ingredients.

3. Place the chicken thighs back into the skillet, and add the wine and thyme. Cover and gently simmer over low heat until cooked through, about 30 – 40 minutes for bone-in thighs, and 15 – 20 minutes for boneless. (Internal temperature should reach 165°F with a meat thermometer.)

4. When the chicken is finished simmering, transfer the thighs to a serving dish with sides and cover to keep warm. Turn the heat up to medium or medium-high and allow the sauce remaining in the pan to cook down by about half, uncovered, about 2 – 3 minutes. Reduce the heat and add the coconut milk; stir to combine. Simmer gently, uncovered, over low heat and allow to thicken slightly, about 2 minutes. Taste sauce, season with additional salt and pepper if needed.

NOTE: if a slightly thicker consistency is desired for the sauce, whisk in the cornstarch and cold water mixture and simmer an additional 1 – 2 minutes to incorporate and heat thoroughly.

6. Pour the sauce over the warm chicken thighs in the serving dish. Garnish with chopped parsley, if desired. Serve immediately.