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History 1301 – 16147

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English Fried Chicken

The recipe that I have chosen is an English fried chicken from 1736. The recipe itself was from a book called, “Dictionarium Domesticum” written by Nathan Bailey. The ingredients for this recipe are relatively simple both for me and the people that might’ve had to make this. It calls for a whole chicken to be carved, which tells me this was more of a family or group meal. Lemons and vinegar were common for the time for cleaning, sanitation, preventing scurvy, food preservation, etc. and so they were readily available making this seem like a commoner dish. The seasoning used were all simple plants that the average persons could grow in their back garden or were already used for most meals, which tells me that the people at the time liked foods that could be similarly prepared for ease of effort. The batter was comprised of ingredients used commonly in baking, thus making those ingredients multi-purpose adding to their seemingly pragmatic lifestyle.

I didn’t have a whole chicken to butcher, nor could I finish such a large meal, so I used some trimmed chicken thighs for my portion. The deep frying had to be done inside over a closed flame with less oil for safety reasons, as an open flame with a large pot of oil was just too dangerous. When I tried the dish, I was not expecting the punch to the mouth that the vinegar and lemons had. It wasn’t unpleasant, primarily because I enjoy vinegar and lemon, but I can see someone else finding it to be overpowering. The onions in the marinade added to the fresh scent of the chicken and along with the parsley on top made the dish have a much-needed herbal aroma. Overall, it was a simple, low-effort, comforting dish that explains why someone after a long days work in 1736 would want.



Recipe: <https://savoringthepast.net/2016/06/25/fried-chicken/>