



Chicken Bouillabaisse



WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Adapting France’s famous fish stew to make a chicken bouillabaisse recipe involved several steps: substituting canned chicken broth for fish stock, adding flour and tomato paste to the saffron and cayenne before adding the broth to give the sauce extra body, adding pastis earlier than usual to give the alcohol time to cook off, and using canned tomatoes, which are reliable year-round. To help the chicken skin stay crisp, we switched from stovetop to oven cooking, where the heat from above kept the moisture from condensing on the chicken. To brighten the traditional saffron mayonnaise for our chicken bouillabaisse recipe, we added lemon juice and Dijon mustard.

INGREDIENTS

INSTRUCTIONS

SERVES 4 TO 6

BOUILLABAISSE

- 3

pounds bone-in, skin-on chicken pieces (breasts, thighs, and drumsticks, with breasts cut in half), trimmed of excess fat
- Table salt and ground black pepper
- 2

tablespoons olive oil

The rouille and croutons (steps 4 and 5) can be prepared either as the chicken cooks or up to 2 days in advance. Leftover rouille will keep refrigerated for up to 1 week and can be used in sandwiches or as a sauce for vegetables and fish. See below for information on anise-flavored liqueur options.

1. **FOR THE BOUILLABAISSE:** Adjust oven racks to middle and lower positions and heat oven to 375 degrees. Pat chicken dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Heat oil in large Dutch oven over medium-high heat

- 1** large leek (white and light green parts only), halved lengthwise, rinsed, and sliced thin (about 1 cup)
- 1** small fennel bulb, halved lengthwise, cored, and sliced thin (about 2 cups)
- ¼** teaspoon saffron threads
- ¼** teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1** tablespoon unbleached all-purpose flour
- 4** medium cloves garlic, minced or pressed through garlic press (about 4 teaspoons)
- 1** tablespoon tomato paste
- 1** (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained
- ½** cup dry white wine
- 3** cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1** strip orange zest (from 1 orange), removed with vegetable peeler, about 3 inches long, cleaned of white pith
- ¼** cup pastis or Pernod (see note)

until just smoking. Add chicken pieces, skin-side down, and cook without moving until well browned, 5 to 8 minutes. Using tongs, flip chicken and brown other side, about 3 minutes. Transfer chicken to large plate.

2. Add leek and fennel; cook, stirring often, until vegetables begin to soften and turn translucent, about 4 minutes. Add saffron, cayenne, flour, garlic, and tomato paste and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add tomatoes, wine, broth, orange zest, pastis, and potatoes; bring to simmer. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 10 minutes.

3. Nestle chicken thighs and drumsticks into simmering liquid with skin above surface of liquid; cook, uncovered, 5 minutes. Nestle breast pieces into simmering liquid, adjusting pieces as necessary to ensure skin stays above surface of liquid. Bake on middle rack, uncovered, until instant-read thermometer inserted into thickest part of chicken registers 145 degrees for breasts and 160 for drumsticks and thighs, 10 to 20 minutes.

4. **FOR THE ROUILLE:** While chicken cooks, microwave water and saffron in medium microwave-safe bowl on high power until water is steaming, 10 to 20 seconds. Allow to sit 5 minutes. Cut 3-inch piece off of baguette; remove and discard crust. Tear crustless bread into 1-inch chunks (you should have about 1 cup). Stir bread pieces and lemon juice into saffron-infused water; soak 5 minutes. Using whisk, mash soaked bread mixture until uniform paste forms, 1 to 2 minutes. Whisk in mustard, egg yolk, cayenne, and garlic until smooth, about 15 seconds. Whisking constantly, slowly drizzle in vegetable oil in steady stream until smooth mayonnaise-like consistency is reached, scraping down bowl as necessary. Slowly whisk in ½ cup olive oil in steady stream until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

5. **FOR THE CROUTONS:** Cut remaining baguette into

- $\frac{3}{4}$ pound Yukon Gold potato (1 large or 2 small), cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch cubes
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon leaves or parsley leaves

ROUILLE AND CROUTONS

- 3 tablespoons water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon saffron threads
- 1 baguette
- 4 teaspoons juice from 1 lemon
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1 large egg yolk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 small cloves garlic, minced or pressed through garlic press (about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Table salt and ground black pepper

$\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick slices. Arrange slices in single layer on rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle with remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Bake on lower rack until light golden brown (can be toasted while bouillabaisse is in oven), 10 to 15 minutes.

6. Remove bouillabaisse and croutons from oven and set oven to broil. Once heated, return bouillabaisse to oven and cook until chicken skin is crisp and instant-read thermometer inserted into thickest part of chicken registers 160 degrees for breasts and 175 for drumsticks and thighs, 5 to 10 minutes (smaller pieces may cook faster than larger pieces; remove individual pieces as they reach temperature).

7. Transfer chicken pieces to large plate. Skim excess fat from broth. Stir tarragon into broth and season with salt and pepper. Transfer broth and potatoes to large shallow serving bowls and top with chicken pieces. Drizzle 1 tablespoon rouille over each portion and spread 1 teaspoon rouille on each crouton. Serve, floating 2 croutons in each bowl and passing remaining croutons and rouille separately.

Shopping

A Taste of Provence

ANISE ACCENTS

Fennel and a liqueur such as pastis or Pernod bring the licorice-like flavors common in southern French cooking to our chicken stew.





Technique

Crisp Braised Skin

Crisp skin on stewed chicken? It sounds like an oxymoron. But by resting the chicken on the potatoes as the bouillabaisse cooks in the oven, the skin stays out of the liquid and becomes crisp. A quick blast of broiler heat before serving further enhances crispness.



HIGH AND DRY