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Chicken Liver Pâté

My family kicks off every Christmas Eve with my sister's chicken liver pâté, setting upon it like savages, schmearing the velvety stuff onto toast points. This ritual dates back to the 1980s, when my sister was first living on her own. Having discovered that chicken livers could be had dirt cheap, she prepared them in every way she could, including this one, a standby of French housewives and midcentury American ladies' luncheons alike. Puréeing the cooked livers along with a little brandy, a lot of butter, and a few other things transforms the humblest of ingredients into something magnificent. —*Beth Kracklauer*

MAKES ABOUT 1½ CUPS

INGREDIENTS

8 oz. chicken livers, cleaned
4 cups chicken stock
2 tbsp. rendered chicken fat or unsalted butter
½ medium yellow onion, minced
1½ tbsp. cognac or brandy
2 hard-boiled eggs
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Toast points, for serving

INSTRUCTIONS

Bring livers and stock to a boil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat; reduce heat to medium-low, and cook until just cooked through, about 8 minutes. Drain, reserving ¼ cup cooking liquid; transfer to a food processor. Heat fat in a 10" skillet over high heat, and add onion; cook until browned, about 4 minutes. Transfer to food processor; add reserved cooking liquid, cognac, eggs, salt, and pepper; purée. Serve with toast.



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Credit: Penny de los Santos