



Photo by Craig Lee / Special to The Chronicle. Food styled by Rachael Day Long

SUNDAY SUPPER: *Dinner in 90 minutes*

Baked Chicken Legs with Porcini Pilaf

Serves 4, with leftovers for salad

Whole grain barley is available in bulk at health food stores such as Whole Foods, and takes about 1 hour to cook. If using a quicker-cooking grain like bulgur wheat, wait to cook it until after the porcini water is ready so the grains soak up some of the mushroom flavor.

1 cup boiling-hot water

1/4 ounce dried porcini or other dried mushrooms

1 1/2 cups barley (preferably whole grain) or other hearty grain, such as brown rice, bulgur wheat or farro

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt + more to taste

1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme

Freshly ground pepper to taste

Olive oil — a drizzle for the pilaf + 2 tablespoons for the chicken

6 chicken legs (drumsticks and thighs attached)

2 tablespoons red or white wine

1/2 onion, sliced

1/2 cup toasted, coarsely chopped almonds

Thyme sprigs for garnish, if desired

Instructions: Preheat the oven to 350°. Pour water over porcini mushrooms and soak 20 minutes.

Prepare the barley or other grain according to package directions, except decrease the liquid called for by 1 cup because you will be adding the mushroom broth during cooking.

After the mushrooms have soaked, chop them into 1/4-inch dice and strain liquid through a coffee filter to remove grit. Add mushroom broth and mushrooms to the pot of barley with 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt and half of the thyme.

Continue cooking barley until done, then let rest 10 minutes. If there is excess liquid in the pot, stir over low heat until evaporated. Season to taste with salt and pepper and add a drizzle of olive oil.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, toss the chicken legs with plenty of salt and pepper and the remaining remaining thyme, 2 tablespoons olive oil, wine and onion. Arrange in one layer in a baking dish, and bake until no longer pink near the bone, about 1 hour.

Serve the chicken with the pilaf and top with the almonds and thyme sprigs, if desired. Reserve 2 pieces of chicken with about 2 tablespoons of the chicken juices, 1 cup pilaf and 1/3 of the almonds for the Chicken Salad with Hearty Grains, Almonds & Apples.

Per serving: 500 calories, 37 g protein, 31 g carbohydrate, 25 g fat (5 g saturated), 105 mg cholesterol, 232 mg sodium, 8 g fiber.

Wine pairing: Barley brings a hearty texture to this dish, while the dark meat provides a deeper flavor than white meat would. The slight earthiness from the porcini suggests a lighter-bodied Pinot Noir like the 2007 La Crema Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir (\$25).