

CHICKEN MARSALA

SERVES 4

Active time: 50 min **Start to finish:** 50 min

Food Editor/Stylist: Paul Grimes

Father: Elmer M. Grimes, Haddonfield, NJ

My dad loved mushrooms, and he always ordered veal Marsala when we went out to restaurants. My mom didn't buy veal very often, so she adapted this recipe for chicken and made it on special occasions. He was also very fond of white Burgundy wine, which makes a wonderful accompaniment to this dish.

- 1¾ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth (14 fl oz)
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped shallot
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 10 oz mushrooms, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 1½ teaspoons finely chopped fresh sage
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 skinless boneless chicken breast halves (2 lb total)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons dry Marsala wine
- ⅔ cup heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

► Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 200°F.

► Bring broth to a boil in a 2-quart saucepan over high heat, then boil, uncovered, until reduced to about ¾ cup, about 20 minutes.

► Cook shallot in 3 tablespoons butter in an 8- to 10-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring, until shallot begins to turn golden, about 1 minute. Add mushrooms, 1 teaspoon sage, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until liquid mushrooms give off is evaporated and mushrooms begin to brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Remove from heat.

► Put flour in a wide shallow bowl. Gently pound chicken to ¼ inch thick between 2 sheets of plastic wrap using the flat side of a meat pounder or a rolling pin.

► Pat chicken dry and season with salt and pepper, then dredge in flour, 1 piece at a time, shaking off excess. Transfer to sheets of wax paper, arranging chicken in 1 layer.

► Heat 1 tablespoon each of oil and butter in a 10-inch heavy skillet over

moderately high heat until foam subsides, then sauté half of chicken, turning over once, until golden and just cooked through, about 4 minutes total. Transfer cooked chicken to a large heatproof platter, arranging in 1 layer, then put platter in oven to keep warm. Wipe out skillet with paper towels and cook remaining chicken in same manner, then transfer to oven, arranging in 1 layer.

► Add ½ cup wine to skillet and boil over high heat, stirring and scraping up brown bits, about 30 seconds. Add reduced broth, cream, and mushrooms, then simmer, stirring occasionally, until sauce is slightly thickened, 6 to 8 minutes. Add lemon juice and remaining 2 tablespoons wine and ½ teaspoon sage.

► Serve chicken with sauce.

CHICKEN JOOK

SERVES 6

Active time: 25 min **Start to finish:** 2¼ hr

Food Editor: Lillian Chou

Father: Kuo Hung Chou, Pine Brook, NJ

Jook, a rice porridge, is eaten at breakfast or as a light lunch in many parts of Asia. Although my father came from Shanghai, he preferred the more flavorful Cantonese version my mother made. Breakfast with "Baba" ("Daddy" in Mandarin) on Sundays meant a table adorned with many small dishes of condiments.

One of his favorites was "thousand-year-old eggs" (pei dan), which are actually chicken or duck eggs preserved in a mixture of clay, lime, and salt. For more information about thousand-year-old eggs, see Kitchen Notebook, page 161.

For sources for the other Chinese ingredients, see Shopping List, page 162.

- 1 bunch scallions
- 1 (1-inch) piece fresh ginger, peeled
- 12 fresh cilantro sprigs
- 1 (2½- to 3-lb) whole chicken
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 3 qt cold water
- ¼ cup dried scallops (about 10)
- ¾ cup long-grain rice
- ¼ cup Chinese (short-grain) sticky rice (also called glutinous)

Special equipment: a small square of cheesecloth; kitchen string

Accompaniments: soy-sauce-pickled cucumbers; pickled mustard greens; thousand-year-old eggs, shelled and cut into wedges; smoked tofu, cut into slices
Garnish: fresh cilantro leaves

► Cut off scallion greens and reserve greens separately from white and pale green parts. Cut ginger in half crosswise and smash 1 piece with flat side of a large heavy knife, reserving remaining piece. Wrap smashed piece of ginger, cilantro, and white and pale green parts of scallion in cheesecloth and tie into a bundle with string.

► Rinse chicken inside and out and put in a 4-to 6-quart heavy pot along with cheesecloth bundle, salt, and water, then bring to a simmer, covered. Cook, covered, 15 minutes.

► Turn off heat and measure out and reserve 1 cup cooking liquid, then cover pot again. Pour reserved liquid into a small bowl and add dried scallops. (Scallops should be completely submerged.) Soak until softened, about 30 minutes.

► While scallops are soaking, let chicken stand in cooking liquid, covered, 30 minutes. (Chicken will be cooked through.) Carefully remove chicken from liquid with tongs, then transfer chicken to a cutting board and cover loosely with foil. Discard cheesecloth bundle from cooking liquid, reserving liquid.

► Rinse long-grain and Chinese sticky rice briefly in a sieve, then add to pot with chicken-cooking liquid.

► Shred scallops into fine threads with a fork or your fingers, discarding tough muscle from side of each scallop if attached. Add scallop threads and scallop-soaking liquid to rice mixture and simmer, partially covered, stirring occasionally, until jook is very thick, about 1 hour.

► While rice is simmering, discard skin from chicken and remove meat in large pieces, then cut meat into ½-inch pieces.

► Cut reserved ginger into thin matchsticks and chop reserved scallion greens.

► Divide chicken among 6 serving bowls, then ladle jook over chicken. Sprinkle ginger and scallions over jook and serve with accompaniments.

Cooks' note:

Jook can be made 1 day ahead and cooled completely, uncovered, then chilled, covered. Bring to a boil before serving.

For MORE RECIPES, see page 168.