



Buttermilk Fried Chicken

SERVINGS 8 to 10 ⌚ **PREP TIME** 1 hr **COOK TIME** 30 mins

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (2 1/2 to 3 lbs) chickens, cut onto breasts, thighs, drumsticks, and wings

For The Brine

- 5 lemons (halved)
- 24 **La Fe Bay Leaves**
- 1 bunch (4 ounces fresh parsley)
- 1 bunch (1 ounce fresh thyme)
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 head garlic (halved horizontally)
- 3/4 cup black peppercorns
- 2 cups kosher salt
- 2 gallons water

For The Coating and Dredging

- 6 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup garlic powder
- 1/4 cup onion powder
- 4 tsp paprika
- 4 tsp cayenne
- 4 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tap freshly ground black pepper
- 1 quart + 6 tbsp buttermilk (divided)

For Frying

- 2 to 3 quarts peanut or canola oil

DIRECTIONS

1. Prepare the Brine: Combine all of the brine ingredients in a large stockpot, cover, and bring to a boil. Boil for 1 minute, stirring to dissolve the salt. Remove from the heat and cool completely, then chill thoroughly in the refrigerator before using. The brine can be refrigerated for up to 3 days. Pour the brine into a large container, add the chicken pieces and refrigerate for 8 to 12 hours (don't refrigerate for much longer, or the chicken will be too salty).
2. Prepare the Chicken: Remove the chicken from the brine and rinse under cold water, washing off any particles from the brine stuck to the chicken. Pat dry with paper towels and let sit at room temperature for 1 1/2 hours, or until it reaches room temperature.
3. Prepare the Coating and Dredging Station: Fill a large pot with at least 2 inches of frying oil, place it over medium heat, and heat to 320° F. Place a wire cooling rack on top of the baking sheet and place it to the side of the pot of oil to drain the cooked chicken.
4. Meanwhile, whisk together the flour, garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, cayenne, salt and pepper. Divide the mixture between two shallow bowls. Pour 1 quart of the buttermilk into a third shallow bowl. Add the 6 tablespoons of buttermilk to one of the bowls with the flour mixture and use a fork or your fingers to toss the mixture together - all of the moisture from the buttermilk should be absorbed and the mixture should look a little shaggy. Set up the station in this order: chicken pieces, dry flour mixture, buttermilk and shaggy flour mixture,

then a parchment-lined baking sheet.

5. Just before frying, dip the chicken thighs into the first bowl of coating, turning to coat and patting off the excess: dip them into the buttermilk, allowing the excess to run back into the bowl: then dip them into the second bowl of shaggy coating. Transfer to the parchment-lined pan.
6. Fry the Chicken: Carefully lower the thighs into the hot oil. Adjust the heat as necessary to return the oil to the proper temperature. Fry for 2 minutes, then carefully move the chicken pieces around in the oil and continue to fry, monitoring the oil temperature and turning the pieces as necessary for even cooking, for 11 to 12 minutes, until the chicken is a deep golden brown, cooked through (should register 170° F on an instant-read thermometer), and very crisp. Meanwhile, coat the chicken drumsticks and transfer to the parchment-lined baking sheet.
7. Transfer the cooked thighs to the cooling rack skin-side-up and let rest while you fry the remaining chicken. Ensure that the oil has returned to 320° F, and cook the chicken drumsticks for about 8 minutes, checking for doneness as you did with the thighs. When the drumsticks are done, transfer them to the cooling rack skin-side-up.
8. Increase the heat slightly and bring the oil up to 340° F. Meanwhile, coat the chicken breasts and wings. Carefully lower the chicken breasts into the hot oil and fry for 7 minutes, or until golden brown, cooked through (should register 165° F on an instant-read thermometer), and crisp. Transfer to the rack, skin-side-up. Cook the wings for minutes, or until golden brown and cooked through. Transfer the wings to the rack and turn off the heat. Allow the chicken to rest for about 10 minutes before serving. If made ahead, the chicken can be placed in a 400° F oven for a few minutes to warm up.