

Chicken Marbella

6-8 servings

Ingredients

5# chicken pieces; bone in and skin on (I've used thighs here, but a mixture of pieces or a couple of cut up fryers works just as well)
1/4 c olive oil
1/4 c red wine vinegar
1/2 c dried & pitted prunes
1/4 c pitted green olives (if using large olives, just allow for an olive per piece of chicken, they can be brined, slightly seasoned, or even stuffed with pimento)
1/4 c capers with juice
5 cloves of garlic
3 bay leaves
2 T dried oregano
1 t salt
1 t pepper
1/2 c brown sugar
1/2 c dry white wine
a big handful of fresh parsley – either flat or curly works – washed and chopped

Directions

First, make the marinade.

In a bowl, mix the oil and the red wine vinegar.

Add in the prunes, olives, and capers with juice; stir.

Mince or press the peeled garlic cloves, and add them in to the oil & vinegar mix.

Add in the bay leaves, oregano, salt & pepper.

Stir well.

Now you can do one of two things:

1. My preference: put the chicken into an extra large plastic zip top bag, and then add all of the marinade to it. Close the top, allowing for a bit of air to be inside, and turn the bag a few times, coating all the chicken pieces with the marinade. Place the bagged mixture in a clean bowl. Put in fridge to marinate for the next 24 hours or so.

2. Add all the chicken in to a large bowl with the marinade, and toss carefully with your hands until it is all well mixed, and the chicken pieces are all coated with the marinade. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap, and put in fridge to marinate for the next 24 hours or so.

Turn the mixture, to recoat the chicken, every six hours or so, until it is time to cook it. Do this by removing the marinating chicken from the fridge, and turning the mixture to allow the marinade to recoat the chicken. This is why I prefer the bag system. It is so easy to remove the bagged chicken from the fridge and gently turn a few times, keeping all of the marinade close to the chicken, without any mess. Return the chicken back to the fridge to continue marinating.

To cook:

One hour before cooking, remove the chicken from the fridge.

Preheat the oven to 350°F

Line a shallow roasting pan, or baking sheet, with parchment. There will be lots of juices, so be sure to allow for them. You could also use two 9" x 13" dishes.

Lay out the chicken pieces, skin side up, with a bit of space between the pieces.

Scoop out the prunes, olives, and capers with a slotted spoon, and tuck in between the pieces of chicken.

Remove the bay leaves.

Carefully pour the rest of the marinade over the chicken.

Sprinkle the brown sugar over the chicken.

Slowly pour the wine over the brown sugar topped chicken.

Bake for one hour in the center of the oven.

Every 20 minutes, remove the chicken from the oven and baste thoroughly.

Check for doneness with a thermometer after 1 hour of cooking.

It should read at least 80°C (176° F), but will probably be higher, which is just fine.

If it isn't give it another 10 minutes and check again. The chicken needs to be fully cooked before serving.

To serve:

Remove the chicken from the pan to a large serving dish. Scoop out the prunes, olives, and capers and arrange with the chicken. Spoon some of the cooking juices over the whole of it.

Sprinkle with parsley, and serve.