



StarBistro



Pollo alla Cacciatora

Serves four people.

Ingredients:

- 1 chicken, skin on, jointed or just use chicken thighs, 3 per person depending on size
- 2 sprigs of rosemary
- ½ bottle of good red wine, or cook with the wine you like to drink
- 100g of smoked pancetta lardons, or diced streaky bacon will work too
- 1 white onion, finely diced
- 1 carrot, peeled and finely diced
- 2 sticks of celery, finely diced
- ¼ bulb of fennel, finely diced
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 6 anchovy fillets
- Large handful of girolle mushrooms, brushed clean and halved
- 300ml of passata
- 2 tins of whole plum tomatoes, crushed by hand
- 2 tbs of tomato paste, triple-concentrated
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 3 juniper berries, crushed
- Handful of black olives
- Black pepper
- Dried chilli flakes to give a bit of kick, if desired
- Fresh oregano leaves to finish

Method

- Slash the chicken flesh a few times and place in a bowl. Season with salt and plenty of pepper, one of the crushed garlic cloves, rosemary and all of the wine. Cover and leave to marinate for as long as possible, preferably overnight.
- Preheat the oven to 180c /gas mark 4.
- Drain the chicken, reserving the marinade, and pat dry.
- In a deep, heavy casserole dish, heat a splash of olive oil and brown the chicken all over. Set aside.



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- In the same pan, add a splash more oil, turn the heat down and start the soffritto. Add the onions, celery, carrot, fennel and garlic and gently fry until soft.
- Add the lardons or bacon and continue to fry until rendered and starting to brown.
- Now add the anchovy fillets and stir to break them up; these will dissolve into the sauce, seasoning it.
- Add the mushrooms and give a quick stir to combine.
- Add the tomato paste and fry until fragrant.
- Add the reserved marinade and bring to the boil. Reduce for 5 minutes.
- Add the passata, crushed plum tomatoes, olives and crushed juniper berries (and chilli flakes if using).
- Turn the heat down and simmer for a further 5 mins.
- At this point the sauce can be left to simmer or chilled down and left in the fridge for up to 3 days. This will improve the flavour.
- Add the chicken pieces to the sauce. Place a lid on top or cover with a double layer of foil.
- Place in the oven for 1 ½ hours on 180c / gas mark 4 or 2 ½ hours on 150c / gas mark 2. You can use a slow cooker if you prefer.
- Finish with salt, black pepper and fresh oregano leaves.
- Serve piping hot with fresh bread, white rice or polenta.