

Nashville-Style Hot Fried Chicken

Recipe from Rodney Frazer

Adapted by Melissa Clark

YIELD 4 to 5 servings

TIME 1 hour 45 minutes, plus at least 13 hours for brining and resting

This version of Nashville hot fried chicken, adapted from Peaches HotHouse in Brooklyn, will make your tongue sizzle and fill your eyes with tears from a combination of cayenne and ghost chile powders. (The latter is the hottest chile in the world, reaching 1,000,000 on the Scoville heat scale.) Note that the recipe calls for both granulated and powdered onion and garlic. Try to use both. The powdered stuff is stronger in flavor while the granulated has a little more texture to it. (However if you can't find both, either kind will work throughout the recipe.) The traditional way to serve this is on top of a piece or two of soft white bread, which helps mitigate the heat. A cold beer wouldn't hurt, either.

—Melissa Clark

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE BRINE:

½ cup coarse kosher salt

⅓ cup ground black pepper

3 tablespoons onion powder

3 tablespoons garlic powder

3 tablespoons cayenne pepper

3 tablespoons paprika

3 ½ pounds chicken, cut into 10 pieces

FOR THE VERY HOT SPICE:

3 tablespoons cayenne pepper

1 to 2 teaspoons smoked ghost-chile powder or smoked hot paprika

2 tablespoons granulated sugar

FOR THE DREDGE:

2 ½ cups all-purpose flour

3 tablespoons granulated garlic

3 tablespoons granulated onion

PREPARATION

Step 1

Prepare the brine: In a large bowl, whisk salt and spices in 2 cups boiling water until salt dissolves. Whisk in 6 cups ice water. The brine should be cold; if not, chill until it is. Add chicken pieces to the cold brine and chill for at least 12 and up to 24 hours.

Step 2

In a bowl, combine the ingredients for the very hot spice mixture. In another bowl, prepare the dredge: combine the flour, granulated garlic and onion, salt and pepper.

Step 3

Remove chicken pieces from brine, pat dry with paper towels and season with a light dusting of hot spice mixture. Dust pieces with dredge mixture. Reserve both the remaining hot spice mixture and the dredge. Let chicken rest in fridge, uncovered, for at least an hour for the coating to adhere.

Step 4

Pour 2 inches of oil into a Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot with a cover. Heat oil to 325 degrees on a deep-fat thermometer. In a shallow bowl, whisk together eggs and 2 cups ice water to make egg wash. Dip chicken in egg wash, then coat with more dredge. Shake pieces lightly so any excess dredge falls off.

Step 5

2 teaspoons kosher salt

2 teaspoons ground black pepper

Safflower, corn or vegetable oil, for frying

2 large eggs

Carefully place chicken in hot oil, about 3 to 4 pieces per batch. Cover pot with lid and let fry for 5 to 6 minutes, until golden brown on one side. Remove lid and flip pieces. Fry another 5 to 6 minutes, uncovered. Using tongs, transfer cooked chicken to a wire rack set over a baking sheet to catch the oil drips. Dust with very hot spice as it comes out of the fryer.

PRIVATE NOTES

Leave a Private Note on this recipe and see it here.

Adapted from Rodney Frazer, Peaches HotHouse, Brooklyn