

## *Chicken and Rabbit*

Chicken Cassandra  
Chicken Breast Stuffed with Fresh Crab  
Chicken Breast Stuffed with Fresh Chevre  
Chicken with 30 Cloves of Garlic  
Lemon Chicken  
Chicken and Mushrooms  
Chicken Nutmeg  
Oregano Chicken  
Chicken Paprikash  
Chicken with Vine-Ripe Tomato Coulis  
Rabbit with Creme Fraiche Wine Sauce

### INTRODUCTION

The majority of my chicken recipes call for boned chicken breasts. Boned breasts cook quickly and, because they are low in fat, go especially well with sauce. If you use bone-in chicken, increase the cooking time and proceed.

### **CHICKEN WITH BASIL CREAM**

SERVES 4

*4 boned, skinless chicken breasts*  
*6 oz creme fraiche*  
*2 cups packed fresh basil leaves*  
*1 tbs butter*  
*1 tbs olive oil*  
*1/2 cup dry white wine*

1. Reserving 4 or 5 leaves for decoration, grind the basil in a blender with a tablespoon or two creme fraiche. Set this mixture aside at room temperature for 2 hours to allow the basil to scent the creme fraiche.
2. Saute the chicken breasts in the oil and butter until done, about 15 minutes. Remove the chicken from the pan and keep warm.
3. Pour off any excess fat, turn up the heat in the pan, and deglaze with the wine. Reduce the wine by half.
4. Add the scented creme fraiche to the pan. Pour in any liquid that has accumulated from the chicken. Mix well, and bubble for 2 to 3 minutes until the sauce is hot.
5. Return the chicken to the pan, and turn to coat the chicken with the sauce.
6. Chop the reserved basil leaves and sprinkle over the chicken for decoration. Serve at once.

### **CHICKEN CASSANDRA**

SERVES 4

This recipe is from Josie's mother whose maiden name was Cassandra. The sauce is a lovely combination of sweet, sour and garlic.

*6 chicken thighs, skin removed*  
*flour*  
*black pepper*

*1 tbs butter*  
*3 tbs olive oil*  
*3 tbs fresh rosemary*  
*1 bay leaf*  
*5 cloves garlic*  
*1 cup marsala*  
*1/2 cup red wine vinegar*  
*1/2 cup creme fraiche*

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Lightly flour the chicken; then roll in black pepper.
3. Heat the oil and butter in a heavy skillet.
4. Smash the garlic in its skin. Do not peel. Add the garlic to the skillet.
5. Add the chicken to the pan. Brown the chicken on both sides. Remove the chicken from the pan.
6. Add the Marsala, vinegar, bay leaf and rosemary. Bubble the mixture for a minute or two scraping up and mixing in any cooked-on bits.
7. Return the chicken to the pan. Place the pan in the oven and roast uncovered at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes. Turn the chicken occasionally.
8. Remove 1 cup of the cooking liquid from the pan. Cool slightly, and mix with 1/2 cup creme fraiche. Return this mixture to the pan. Cook for another 15 minutes.
9. Serve the chicken with its sauce spooned over.

## **CHICKEN BREAST STUFFED WITH FRESH CRAB**

SERVES 4

### **The Chicken**

*4 boneless chicken breasts, skin removed*

1. Place a chicken breast on a work surface. Cut a pouch (pocket) in it by inserting a knife into the wide end of the breast and making a lengthwise, 1 inch incision down the center toward the other end. Gently deepen the incision taking care to keep the opening to the pouch small. Manipulate the knife blade so that the pouch becomes wider and deeper internally but the opening stays about 1 inch. If the opening is too wide, the filling will not stay in.

### **The Crab Filling**

*4 oz fresh pre-cooked crab*  
*3 small shallots*  
*1/4 cup dry white wine*  
*5 oz creme fraiche*  
*1-1/2 tbs butter*  
*salt*  
*cayenne pepper*

1. Finely chop the 3 shallots and sweat them in the butter. Add the crab and lightly brown the crab. Add the white wine. Bubble the wine for 1 minute.
2. Add the creme fraiche and let it bubble for 1 minute.
3. Add the salt and cayenne to taste. Remove the pan from the heat, and let it cool slightly.

4. Put the filling into a pastry bag with a 3/4 inch nozzle, and squeeze as much filling as you can into the pouch of each chicken breast.

### **Cooking the Chicken**

*2 tbs butter*  
*2 shallots, minced*  
*1/4 cup dry white wine*  
*1/2 cup chicken stock*  
*1 cup creme fraiche*  
*salt*  
*cayenne pepper*

1. Sweat the chicken for 1 minute on each side in butter. Add the shallots, white wine and stock. Poach the chicken in gently boiling stock for 4 or 5 minutes. Remove the chicken and keep it warm.
2. Reduce the cooking juices by half. Add the creme fraiche; bring just to the boil. Add salt and cayenne to taste. Remove from the heat. (This is the sauce base.)

### **Saucing**

*1/2 tsp paprika*  
*sauce base*

1. Return the sauce base to the heat (do not boil). Add the paprika.
2. Put the stuffed chicken breasts onto plates and pour the sauce through a fine sieve onto the chicken.

Serve with French bread and a good white wine.

## **CHICKEN BREAST STUFFED WITH FRESH CHEVRE**

SERVES 6

*6 boned chicken breasts, skin on*  
*1 six oz chevre frais*  
*3 tbs fresh oregano leaves, chopped*  
*2 cloves garlic, minced*  
*2 tbs olive oil*  
*cracked black pepper, to taste*  
*6 oz creme fraiche*  
*juice of one lemon*

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Take the creme fraiche out of the refrigerator and stir in the lemon juice. Let the creme fraiche come to room temperature while you prepare the chicken.
3. Mash the chevre with the garlic, oregano, pepper and olive oil.
4. Gently lift the skin from each breast far enough to form a large pocket. Fill this pocket with the cheese mixture.
5. Arrange the breasts in a heavy skillet.
6. Bake in a 350 degree F oven for 40 minutes or until the chicken is done.
7. Serve the chicken topped with the lemon-creme fraiche sauce.

## **CHICKEN WITH 30 CLOVES OF GARLIC**

SERVES 4

An adaptation of chicken Ali Baba.

*1 chicken, cut up*  
*2 tbs butter*  
*2 tbs olive oil*  
*30 whole cloves garlic, peeled*  
*1 medium onion*  
*1/4 tsp ground black pepper*  
*6 oz creme fraiche*  
*1 tsp fresh tarragon, minced*

1. Saute the chicken in the oil and butter until browned.
2. Remove the chicken from the pan.
3. Add the garlic, onion and pepper. Saute until the garlic just starts to brown.
4. Replace the chicken in the pan. Cover the pan and cook over low heat, turning the chicken occasionally until the chicken is tender, about 45 minutes.
5. When the chicken is done, remove it from the pan; keep it warm. Raise the heat, and reduce the juices to about 1 cup, taking care not to burn them.
6. When the juices are reduced, add the creme fraiche. Bring back to the boil. Stir to blend well.
7. Spoon the sauce over the chicken.
8. Garnish each serving with the minced tarragon.

## **LEMON CHICKEN**

SERVES 4

This is an easy update of an old favorite.

*4 boned chicken breasts*  
*1 lemon*  
*6 oz creme fraiche*  
*1 tbs butter*  
*1 tbs olive oil*  
*1/2 tsp cracked black pepper*

1. Saute the chicken breasts in butter and olive oil until they are cooked, about 15 minutes.
2. Remove the chicken from the pan; keep warm. Pour off excess fat.
3. Cut the lemon in half crosswise (i.e., not from end to end). Cut four, round paper thin slices of lemon. Reserve these slices.
4. Add the juice from the remainder of the lemon to the pan. Pour in any liquid that has accumulated from the chicken. Turn up the heat and deglaze the pan with the lemon juice. Reduce the lemon juice by half.
5. Add the pepper.
6. Add the creme fraiche to the pan. Stir well and heat to bubbling for 2 minutes.
7. Replace the chicken in the pan. Turn the chicken to coat well with the sauce. Continue to heat until the chicken is heated through.
8. Serve the chicken with its sauce. Top each serving with one paper thin slice of lemon.

## **CHICKEN AND MUSHROOMS**

SERVES 4

This dish is a classic. The simple earthy flavor of mushrooms is captured, enhanced, and made sublime by creme fraiche.

*4 boned, skinless chicken breasts*

*1 lb fresh mushrooms (wild, cultivated or a combination thereof)*

*4 tbs butter*

*2 tbs olive oil*

*1/2 cup white wine*

*6 oz creme fraiche*

1. Clean the mushrooms and cut into large pieces. If you have small mushrooms, leave whole.
2. Saute the chicken in 2 tablespoons of butter and the oil. Turn to cook evenly.
3. Meanwhile, saute the mushrooms in the remaining butter. Add more if needed. Cook the mushrooms just until they give up their liquid. Add the creme fraiche; stir to mix well. Set aside.
4. When the chicken is cooked, remove it from the pan; keep warm. Pour off excess fat and deglaze with the wine.
5. Add the mushrooms to the deglazed pan; bubble for a minute to heat the mushrooms through. Do not overcook.
6. You may return the chicken to the pan and serve it in the sauce or place the chicken on plates and top with the sauce.

## **CHICKEN NUTMEG**

SERVES 4

*2 tsp freshly ground nutmeg*

*1 cup creme fraiche*

*4 boned, skinless chicken breasts*

*1 tbs butter*

*1 tbs olive oil*

*1/2 cup dry white wine*

1. Several hours in advance, grind the nutmeg and add it to the creme fraiche. Refrigerate until ready to use. This gives the nutmeg time to scent the creme fraiche.
2. Saute the chicken in the butter and oil until done, about 15 minutes.
3. When the chicken is done, remove it from the pan and keep warm.
4. Pour off any excess fat, turn up the heat and deglaze with the wine. Reduce the wine by half.
5. Add the scented creme fraiche to the pan. Pour in any liquid that has accumulated from the chicken. Mix well and bubble for 2 to 3 minutes, until the sauce is hot.
6. Return the chicken to the pan and turn to coat the chicken with the sauce. Bubble until the chicken is heated through.
7. Garnish the chicken with freshly ground nutmeg, and serve immediately.

## **OREGANO CHICKEN**

SERVES 4

*4 boned, skinless chicken breasts*

*6 oz creme fraiche*

*1 tbs butter*

*1 tbs olive oil*

*1/4 cup dry white wine*

*2 tbs chopped fresh oregano*

*1 lemon*

1. Several hours in advance, stir the chopped oregano into the creme fraiche so that the oregano can scent the creme fraiche.
2. Saute the chicken breasts in the butter and olive oil until they are cooked, about 15 minutes.
3. Remove the chicken from the pan and keep warm. Pour off any excess fat.
4. Pour the wine into the pan.
5. Bring the wine to a boil. Scrape up any browned bits clinging to the pan. Reduce the wine by half.
6. Add the oregano-scented creme fraiche. Stir to mix well with the reduced wine.
7. Pour in any liquid that has collected from the chicken; mix well.
8. Return the chicken to the pan. Bring the sauce to a simmer and turn the chicken to coat well with the sauce. Continue heating until the chicken is heated through.
9. Give each breast one squeeze of lemon juice. Serve immediately with chilled white wine.

## **CHICKEN PAPRIKASH**

SERVES 4

This is a quick, easy update of an old favorite.

*4 boned, skinless chicken breasts*

*6 oz creme fraiche*

*1 tbs Hungarian paprika*

*1 tbs butter*

*1 tbs olive oil*

*1/4 cup dry white wine*

*pinch red pepper flakes*

1. Several hours in advance, stir the paprika into the creme fraiche. Refrigerate to let the paprika scent the creme fraiche.
2. Saute the chicken breasts in the butter and olive oil until they are cooked, about 15 minutes.
3. Remove the chicken from the pan; keep warm.
4. Pour off any excess fat, turn up the heat and deglaze with the wine. Reduce the wine by half.
5. Add the paprika-scented creme fraiche. Stir to mix well. Add any liquid that has accumulated from the chicken. Mix well and bubble for 2 to 3 minutes until the sauce is hot.
6. Return the chicken to the pan. Turn the chicken to coat well with the sauce. Continue heating until the chicken is heated through.

7. Decorate with a pinch of red pepper flakes.
8. Serve immediately with a chilled white wine.

### **TARRAGON CHICKEN**

SERVES 4

*4 boned, skinless chicken breasts*  
*6 oz creme fraiche*  
*1 tbs butter*  
*1 tbs olive oil*  
*1/4 cup dry white wine*  
*2 tbs chopped fresh tarragon*

1. Stir the tarragon into creme fraiche several hours before preparing recipe so that the tarragon can scent the creme fraiche.
2. Saute the chicken breasts in butter and olive oil until they are cooked, about 15 minutes.
3. Remove chicken from the pan; keep warm. Pour off excess fat.
4. Pour wine into the pan.
5. Turn up the heat and bring the wine to a boil. Scrape up any browned bits clinging to the pan. Reduce the wine by half.
6. Add tarragon-scented creme fraiche. Pour in any liquid that has accumulated from the chicken. Stir to mix well with the reduced wine.
7. Return the chicken to the pan. Bring the sauce to a simmer and turn the chicken to coat well with the sauce. Continue heating until the chicken is heated through.
8. Serve with French bread and chilled white wine.

### **CHICKEN WITH VINE-RIPE TOMATO COULIS**

SERVES 4

This is a seasonal dish: vine-ripe tomato season.

*4 boned, skinless chicken breasts*  
*2 tbs butter*  
*4 medium sized vine-ripe tomatoes*  
*1 clove garlic*  
*6 oz creme fraiche*  
*4 tbs minced fresh basil*

1. Saute the chicken breasts in the butter.
2. Puree the tomatoes and garlic in a blender or food processor.
3. When the chicken is done, remove it from the pan. Keep warm.
4. Add the puree of tomatoes to the pan. Bubble the sauce for 2 to 3 minutes.
5. Stir in the creme fraiche and bubble for 2 to 3 minutes more.
6. Mirror a plate with the sauce; top with a breast of chicken; top the chicken with a tablespoon of minced fresh basil.
7. Serve with a chilled Beaujolais or other light, red wine.

### **RABBIT WITH DIJON SAUCE**

SERVES 4

*1 fryer rabbit cut into pieces*  
*2 tbs butter*

*2 tbs olive oil*  
*3/4 lb small mushrooms, cleaned*  
*1/2 cup minced shallots*  
*1/4 cup minced parsley*  
*1 cup dry white wine*  
*1 cup creme fraiche*  
*2 tbs Dijon mustard*

1. Heat the oil and butter in a heavy skillet. Add the rabbit, and cook until it is browned on all sides. Remove the rabbit from the pan; keep warm.
2. Add the mushrooms, shallots and minced parsley to the pan. Cook until the shallots are translucent. (Add more butter if needed.)
3. Pour in the wine. Replace the rabbit in the pan; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat, and cook until the rabbit is tender, about 45 minutes.
4. When the rabbit is tender, remove it from the pan. Stir in the creme fraiche; add the mustard. Mix well, and bubble the sauce for a minute or two.
5. Replace the rabbit; turn to coat with the sauce. Serve at once.

### **RABBIT WITH CREME FRAICHE WINE SAUCE**

SERVES 6

*4 lbs rabbit, cut into serving pieces*  
*1/2 cup olive oil*  
*1 tbs butter*  
*3 cloves garlic, chopped*  
*1 sprig rosemary*  
*2 cups dry white wine*  
*salt and pepper*  
*1/4 lb tomatoes, peeled and drained*  
*1 cup chicken stock*  
*1/4 lb pitted black olives*  
*1/2 cup creme fraiche*

1. Heat the oil and butter over high heat. Add the rabbit pieces and brown on all sides. Remove the rabbit and set aside.
2. Add the garlic. Saute until it just starts to turn golden.
3. Add the rosemary and wine. Reduce by half.
4. Return the rabbit to the pan. Season with salt and pepper and simmer for 20 minutes.
5. Add the tomatoes and the chicken stock. Continue to simmer for 15 minutes.
6. Add the pitted olives and cook for 15 minutes more.
7. Remove the meat from the pan. Remove the rosemary sprig.
8. Stir in the creme fraiche. Bring back to a bubble. Return the meat to the pan. Simmer for 2 to 3 minutes until the meat is heated through.
9. Serve hot with French bread.