

CHICKEN PAPRIKA, GOSH!

Chicken Paprikash is a dish of Hungarian origin traditionally made with chicken, paprika, and lots of lard, served over pasta. Apparently, there is no one authentic classic recipe, and, indeed, preparations of it often vary even among families. It is said, jokingly I'm sure, that the Gypsy recipe for this dish begins, "First, steal one chicken..."

Versions of it are spread across the European continent, from Greece to the Czech Republic, to Russia. The Americanized version usually substitutes sour cream for the lard and mild red paprika for typically the more authentic sweet paprika typically used in Hungary.

The soul of the paprikash is the paprika, the soul of Hungarian cooking, and there are several kinds, ranging from mild to spicy and smoky. I mimic the hot smoky variety here, but using regular off-the-shelf paprika.

Normally the recipe calls for a disjointed whole chicken. The one below is less caloric, has no white meat to taste dry and stringy, and has no bones.

1 lb boneless skinless chicken thighs
2½ tsp paprika
1 tsp New Mexico red chile powder
½ tsp low salt chicken base or bouillon cube
¼ tsp fresh ground black pepper
1 tbsp olive oil
1 cup onion, chopped
1 can (14½ -oz) diced tomatoes, undrained
1 bay leaf
3 drops liquid hickory smoke
½ cup fat free sour cream
1 tbsp dry sherry
4 oz lower G. I. noodles
1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

Mix the paprika and chile powder. Season the chicken with ½ tsp of it and the pepper. Heat the oil in a nonstick skillet on medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook 3 min-

utes per side or until browned. Remove the chicken from skillet and reserve. Add the onion to skillet and cook for about three minutes while stirring, until translucent. Stir in the tomatoes, bay leaf, liquid smoke, and remaining paprika-chile mix. Bring to boil, return chicken to skillet, reduce heat to low, and cover and simmer 8 to 10 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Stir in the sherry and sour cream until well blended. Make the pasta according to package instructions. Serve chicken and paprika sauce mixture over noodles and sprinkle with chopped parsley.

WOOSTERED ROOSTER

The note that bore this recipe indicated that it originated on Saturday evening, August 3rd, 2002. Its simplicity prevails today, except that now I usually substitute a few capers blended in a little white wine for the low-sodium Worcestershire Sauce for Chicken, which I no longer keep in stock. The name is the same, regardless of which ingredient is used.

1 to 3½ lb chicken, halved
2 oz low-sodium Worcestershire Sauce for Chicken[®]
½ tsp fresh ground pepper
1 tbsp garlic powder
½ cup dry white wine
2 cockscombs, made from roasted red peppers (Mezzetta[®] canned)
Tabasco[®] sauce to taste

Combine the low-sodium Worcestershire, pepper, garlic powder, and wine, and marinate the chicken in this for at least half an hour. Remove the chicken from the marinade and broil 35 to 45 minutes until done (or use a meat thermometer if you have one). Garnish with the ersatz-cockscombs when serving.