



ANSON MILLS

Chicken Bog

Yield

6 main dish portions

Time

First day, cook the chicken and reduce the stock (active time 25 minutes, plus 1 hour to cook the chicken, 30 minutes to cool, and 45 minutes to reduce the stock); second day, cook the rice in the bog (active time 5 minutes, plus 25 minutes to finish cooking)

Cooking Remarks

Originally, this dish would have been made with a stewing chicken, but unless you own a laying hen on the verge of retirement, you're looking at a maximum 3- to 3½-pound grocery-store bird. Gentle stewing is recommended, no matter what the bird's age. Cook the chicken breast side up to avoid overcooking the white meat; if the breastbone stands up out of the broth, all the better. If you have time, cool the chicken in the broth before hauling it onto a baking sheet to pull the meat off the bones—the cooked meat will reabsorb some of the broth as it cools and remain tender (and you won't want to scream from the pain of pulling apart a hot bird).

Chicken bog is dead easy, but the ingredient proportions are critical. In the end, you'll be pleased if you've kept track of amounts of pulled chicken meat, volume of broth, and weights of sausage and rice. Speaking of sausage, its quality has a big impact on the overall quality of this dish. Low-rent supermarket sausage powered with liquid smoke will overwhelm the other flavors. If you can't locate real smoked sausage, leave it out altogether. The bog will be grateful.

Working Ahead

Cook the chicken, pick the meat from the bones, and reduce and strain the stock on the first day; the finishing work on the second day is a cinch. It is also easier to remove fat from the stock when it is cold and the fat has congealed. Don't cut the scallions in advance. They will lose their fresh flavor and wind up tasting like soap.

Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe, you will need a heavy, nonreactive 5- to 6-quart stockpot; a pair of tongs; a rimmed baking sheet; a fine-holed footed colander or fine-mesh strainer; a large mixing bowl; and a wooden spoon.

Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken (3 to 3½ pounds), washed, liver and gizzard reserved for another use, and neck bone, if present, along for the ride
- 2 medium yellow onions, chopped fine
- 1 large or 2 small carrots, peeled and chopped into ½-inch lengths
- 1 celery rib, chopped into ½-inch lengths
- 3 garlic cloves, peeled

6 fresh thyme sprigs or 1½ teaspoons dried thyme
1 Turkish bay leaf
Handful of fresh flat-leaf parsley stems
4 cups Rich Homemade Chicken Stock
4 cups spring or filtered water
10 ounces smoked sausage (½ inch in diameter), preferably dry-cured, cut into ½-inch rounds
7 ounces (1 cup) Anson Mills Carolina Gold Rice
1½ teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
Fine sea salt
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 scallions
3 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves

Directions

- 1. Day one:** Combine the chicken neck (if using), onions, carrot(s), celery, garlic, thyme, bay leaf, parsley stems, chicken stock, and water in a heavy, nonreactive 5- to 6-quart stockpot. Place the chicken breast side up in the pot and bring the liquid to a simmer over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and simmer gently until the chicken legs pull easily from the carcass, about 1 hour. Remove from the heat and let cool for 30 minutes.
- 2.** Using tongs, transfer the chicken from the pot to a rimmed baking sheet. Let stand until cool enough to handle, and then remove the meat from the bones and pull it into small pieces. Discard the chicken skin. Cover the meat and refrigerate. (Note: 1 pound or 4 cups of chicken meat is all you need for the bog. If you have extra meat, save it for a sandwich.) Return the bones to the stockpot, bring the broth to a simmer over medium heat, and simmer until it is rich, flavorful, and reduced to generous 6 cups, about 45 minutes. Strain the broth through a fine-holed footed colander or fine-mesh strainer into a large mixing bowl. Refrigerate overnight.
- 3. Day two:** Using a spoon, lift the congealed fat from the surface of the broth and discard the fat. Return the broth to the stockpot, set the pot on the stove, stir in the reserved chicken meat and the sausage, and bring to a simmer, covered, over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the rice, pepper, and salt to taste. Continue to simmer very gently, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until the rice is tender and the broth has thickened, about 25 minutes. The stew should be thick but not dry, and the grains of rice should be full but not exploded.
- 4.** Remove the pot from the heat and stir in the butter. Mince the scallions. Ladle the stew into 6 shallow bowls. Sprinkle with scallions and parsley and serve immediately. Pickled jalapeños are a perfect condiment to serve with this dish.