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by Liz Robb

Creamy Chicken, Leek and Mushroom Casserole



Ingredients

3 large chicken breasts
7 tablespoons of plain flour
Salt and freshly milled black pepper
Olive oil
3 shallots
2 fat cloves of garlic
2 leeks
150g chestnut mushrooms
100g Portobello mushrooms
1 tablespoon of sunflower oil
50g butter
300ml chicken stock
1 lemon
250ml single cream
A handful of fresh parsley

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees, 160 degrees fan oven.
2. Peel and finely chop the shallots. Remove the outer layer of the leeks, wash thoroughly and slice. Wipe and slice the mushrooms.
3. Cut the chicken breasts into thick strips, about 5 pieces per chicken breast. Sift 4 tablespoons of the flour into a shallow dish and season well with salt and black pepper.
4. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large frying pan. Coat half of the chicken pieces by dipping them in the seasoned flour and fry for a few minutes on each side to brown them. Lift out onto a warm plate and repeat with the rest of the chicken, topping up the oil if necessary.
5. In a clean pan, heat the sunflower oil gently and sauté the onion for 5 minutes until softened. Add the leek and crushed garlic and cook for a further 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, then add the mushrooms and cook for another 3 – 4 minutes.
6. To make the creamy sauce, cut the butter into small pieces and melt in a non-stick

pan. Gradually stir in the remaining flour to make a thick paste and cook gently for a minute or two, then add the hot chicken stock a little at a time, stirring well to blend it in. Stir in a tablespoon of lemon juice, season with salt and pepper to taste, then finally stir in the cream.

- 7 7. To assemble the dish, lay the chicken strips in the bottom of an ovenproof dish and cover with the cooked vegetables, lifted out of the pan with a slotted spoon. Pour the sauce evenly over the top, cover with foil and bake for 40-45 minutes in the preheated oven.
- 8 8. Serve garnished with finely chopped parsley. I like it best served with plain boiled rice, or perhaps fresh green vegetables and baby new potatoes.

Cooks Note

Notes:

- You can use chicken thighs or drumsticks instead; adjust the cooking times accordingly so that they are cooked right through.
 - In season, asparagus tastes really good in this dish too; use it to replace the leeks.
 - Add your favourite herbs instead of the parsley, thyme or sage perhaps.
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