

# Crusty Chicken Thighs with Mushroom Sauce

Thighs are the part of the chicken that I enjoy most. When I cook them in stews or with a sauce, I remove the skin because when it is cooked with moisture, it gets rubbery and releases all its fat into the sauce.

In this recipe, I cook the thighs in a skillet skin side down, so the skin becomes crisp, dry, and beautifully browned. Make sure to use a nonstick skillet with a tight-fitting lid, so as the skin fries, the flesh is cooked by the steam. The portions are relatively small here, but within the context of a menu this is enough meat.

## 4 Servings

- 4 large chicken thighs (about 13/4 pounds total), skin on
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup diced (1/4-inch) onion
- 1 1/2 tablespoons coarsely chopped garlic
- 3 cups washed and diced (1/2-inch) baby bella or white mushrooms
- 1/3 cup dry white wine
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives, for garnish

Arrange the chicken thighs skin side down on a cutting board. Using a sharp paring knife, trim off any excess skin at the edges and cut about 1/2 inch deep into the flesh on either side of the thigh bone. (This will help the meat cook more quickly.) Sprinkle the thighs with 1/2 teaspoon each of the salt and pepper and arrange them skin side down in one layer in a nonstick skillet with a tight-fitting lid.

Place the skillet over high heat and when the thighs start sizzling reduce the heat to medium, cover tightly, and cook for 16 to 18 minutes, checking occasionally to make sure the chicken is browning properly. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 150 degrees. If the chicken seems to be cooking too fast after 10 minutes or so, reduce the heat to low. The skin of the chicken should be very crisp and brown. Transfer the chicken skin side up to an ovenproof platter and place it in the oven.

Discard all but 2 tablespoons fat from the skillet in which you cooked the chicken. Add the onion, garlic, and mushrooms and sauté them over high heat for about 3 minutes. Sprinkle the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper on the mushrooms and then add the wine and any liquid that has accumulated around the thighs on the platter. Cook the sauce over high heat for about 1 minute to reduce the liquid.

To serve, divide the sauce among four hot plates. Place a thigh in the middle of the mushroom sauce on each plate, spoon some sauce over, sprinkle on the chives, and serve.