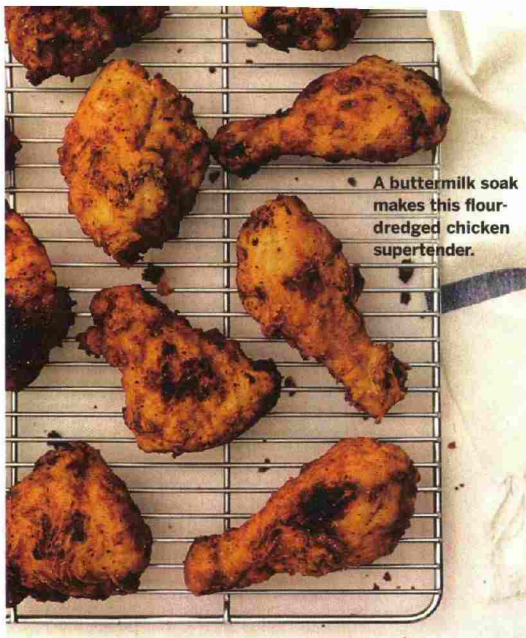


tasting&testing

TEST KITCHEN

perfecting fried chicken

Chefs have become obsessed—*obsessed*—with fried chicken. F&W's *Grace Parisi* makes a buttermilk-soaked kind that's great dredged in flour or dipped in a beer batter.



A buttermilk soak makes this flour-dredged chicken supertender.

Crispy Buttermilk Fried Chicken

TOTAL: 1 HR PLUS 2 HR SOAKING

6 SERVINGS

BUTTERMILK SOAK

- 3 cups buttermilk
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 4 pounds medium chicken wings, thighs and drumsticks

FLOUR DREDGE

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Vegetable oil, for frying

1. MAKE THE BUTTERMILK SOAK: In a large bowl, combine the buttermilk with the salt, black pepper and cayenne. Add the chicken and stir to coat. Let stand at room temperature for 2 hours or refrigerate for 4 hours.
2. MAKE THE FLOUR DREDGE: In a large, resealable plastic bag, mix the flour with the onion powder, garlic powder, salt, black pepper and cayenne and shake to combine.
3. Set a rack on a baking sheet. Working with one piece at a time, remove the chicken from the buttermilk soak, letting the excess drip back into the bowl. Dredge the chicken in the flour mixture, pressing so it adheres all over. Transfer the coated chicken to the rack and let stand for 30 minutes.
4. In a deep skillet, heat 1 inch of oil to 350°. Set another rack over a baking sheet; line with paper towels. Fry the chicken in batches at 315°, turning once, until golden and an instant-read thermometer

inserted in the thickest part of each piece registers 160°, 15 to 18 minutes. Transfer the chicken to the paper-lined rack and let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

VARIATION Beer-Battered Buttermilk Fried Chicken

Soak the chicken in the buttermilk as directed. In a large bowl, combine 2 cups all-purpose flour with 2 teaspoons each of onion powder, garlic

powder, cayenne pepper, kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Whisk in 18 ounces (2¼ cups) dry, crisp beer, such as pilsner. Pat the chicken thoroughly then add it to the batter, turning to coat. Fry the chicken as directed, about 18 to 20 minutes.

WINE OR BEER Sparkling wine and fried chicken work well together. Try Prosecco from northern Italy, which has a soft fruitiness, like the citrusy NV *Mionetto* Brut or the peachy 2008 Bisson. Or drink a crisp pilsner like the pleasantly bitter Victory Prima Pils or the more delicate Pilsner Urquell.



This organization supplies animals to families in developing nations; a \$20 donation provides a flock of chicks. heifer.org.

Spicing Up Fried Chicken

CHOOSE A FLAVOR: | TO THE FLOUR OR BATTER, ADD:

<i>indian</i>	1 tablespoon garam masala
<i>mid-atlantic</i>	1 tablespoon Old Bay seasoning
<i>middle eastern</i>	1 tablespoon za'atar

PHOTOGRAPH: TINA RUPP; FOOD STYLIST: ANNE DISRUDE; PROP STYLIST: STELLA J. YOON

160 WEB EXTRAS For more terrific fried-chicken recipes: foodandwine.com/fried-chicken.

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