

FOOD & DINING

Think outside the backyard barbecue box

While backyard barbecue menus are often dominated by hot dogs and hamburgers, hosts can expand that menu however they see fit. For example, fried chicken is a natural complement to popular backyard barbecue fare, such as potato salad and fresh watermelon.

Store-bought fried chicken can suffice in a pinch, but hosts who want to go the extra mile and offer a delicious homemade meal can prepare the following recipe for “Kansas City Fried Chicken” courtesy of Neal Corman’s “Virgil’s Barbecue Road Trip Cookbook” (St. Martin’s Press).

KANSAS CITY FRIED CHICKEN

Serves 4 to 6

- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup hot sauce
- 5 1/2 tablespoons Fried Chicken Spice Mix (see below), divided
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 4-pound whole roaster chickens, cut into 10 pieces each
- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 cups canola oil

1. In a large mixing bowl, thoroughly blend the buttermilk, hot sauce, 2 tablespoons of the Fried Chicken Spice Mix, salt, and 1 cup cold water.
2. Press the chicken pieces into the marinade. Place in a covered container (ensuring that the chicken is covered with marinade), and refrigerate for 24 hours.
3. Thoroughly combine the flour with 3 1/2 tablespoons of the Fried Chicken Spice Mix in a medium bowl.
4. In a large and deep pan, or an electric skillet, add enough canola oil to fill the pan one-third full. Heat the oil to 350 F.
5. Set the marinated chicken next to the bowl of flour, close to the skillet. Remove a piece of chicken from the marinade, allow any excess to drain, then dredge in the flour mix. Shake off the excess flour and slide into the skillet.
6. Fry the chicken for 4 to 5 minutes on each side, or until the internal temperature reaches 165 F. Fry the chicken in batches, being careful not to crowd the skillet and to maintain the right temperature.
7. Remove the fried chicken to a sheet pan covered

with three or four layers of paper towels. When all the chicken has been fried and dried on the paper towels, allow to cool slightly before serving.

FRIED CHICKEN SPICE MIX

Makes 2 cups, plus 2 tablespoons

- 6 tablespoons kosher salt
- 6 tablespoons sweet paprika
- 5 tablespoons onion powder
- 5 tablespoons garlic powder
- 3 tablespoons dry mustard
- 3 tablespoons cracked black pepper

- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon poultry seasoning
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon dried sage
- 1 tablespoon chili powder

Thoroughly blend all of the ingredients in a medium mixing bowl and transfer to a covered container. Keep in a cool, dry place until needed.



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