

Old-Fashioned Cajun Chicken Stew: A Soul-Warming Southern Classic

This recipe relies on traditional techniques and simple, high-impact ingredients:



OVEN
325°F

TIME
10 min

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INGREDIENTS

The Protein: 6 chicken leg quarters (trimmed and cut).

The Fat: 2 Tbsp lard (essential for that authentic high-heat browning).

The Holy Trinity: 2 medium yellow onions (diced), 2 stalks of celery (diced), and 1/2 bell pepper (diced).

Aromatics: 4 cloves of fresh garlic (minced) and 1 tsp dry parsley.

The Thickener: 2 Tbsp dark roux (pre-prepared or homemade).

The Liquid: 2 1/2 cups chicken stock (Better Than Bouillon roasted chicken base is highly recommended).

Seasoning: Salt, black pepper, garlic powder, and onion powder (to taste).

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Season and Brown:** Dry your chicken pieces thoroughly with paper towels-this is the secret to a good sear. Season the chicken aggressively with salt, pepper, garlic powder, and onion powder. In a heavy-bottomed pot (like a Dutch oven), melt the lard over medium-high heat. Brown the chicken in batches until the skin is crispy and golden. Don't wash the pot! You want that dark "fond" stuck to the bottom.
- 2. SautØ the Trinity:** Remove the chicken and set it aside on a plate. Add the onions, celery, and bell pepper to the pot. As the vegetables release their moisture, use a wooden spoon to scrape all those flavorful brown bits off the bottom of the pot. Cook until the vegetables are tender and the onions are translucent (about 10 minutes).
- 3. Build the Gravy:** Add the minced garlic and stir in the dark roux. Let it dissolve into the vegetable mixture for a minute. Slowly whisk in your chicken stock, ensuring there are no lumps. Season the gravy with a bit more salt and pepper to taste.
- 4. The Long Simmer:** Add the chicken (and any juices from the plate) back into the pot.
- 5. Oven :** Method: Cover and place in a preheated 325°F oven for 2 1/2 hours. This results in the most tender meat.
- 6. Stovetop :** Method: Cover and simmer on low for 45 minutes to an hour.
- 7. Final Touch:** About 5 minutes before serving, stir in the dry parsley. This adds a hint of freshness to the rich, heavy gravy. Serve hot over a bed of steamed white rice.

SWAPS & NOTES

The Roux: If you don't have a dark roux prepared, you can make a quick one by whisking equal parts flour and oil over medium-low heat until it reaches the color of a shiny penny or an old Hershey bar.

The Fat: If you don't have lard, bacon drippings are a fantastic substitute that adds an extra layer of smokiness.

Vegetables: If you want a slightly sweeter profile, use a red bell pepper instead of green.

The Chicken: You can use a whole broken-down chicken, but avoid using only breasts, as they can become dry during the long simmering process.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Season Heavily: As Pam Lowe says, don't be afraid to season the chicken a lot.

The flour in the roux and the rice it's served over will mellow out the salt and spices.

Patience with the Trinity: Don't rush the onions.

The longer they cook down with the fond, the sweeter and deeper your gravy will be.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/old-fashioned-cajun-chicken-stew-a-soul-warming-southern-classic/>