

Authentic Delaware Chicken and Dumplings

Sue Layton

Serves 4 (or maybe not!)

2 lb. chicken thighs, skin removed
8 c. chicken broth
3/4 tsp. salt
1 large onion, diced
2 stalks celery, diced

Place chicken thighs in a large Dutch oven and cover with chicken broth. Add salt, onion and celery. Bring to a boil, turn down to a moderate simmer and cook for about 60 minutes until meat is beginning to fall off the bone. Remove chicken from broth and cool. Remove broth from the heat and allow to cool just until lukewarm, about an hour* (see below for quick-cooling method). When chicken has cooled, remove meat from bones and set aside.

Dumplings

1 c. flour
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 c. cooled broth (approx.)

In a large bowl, combine flour and salt. Add broth and mix with a fork until it starts forming a ball. The dough will be very soft and sticky. Put all the remaining chicken broth back into the Dutch oven and bring to a low boil.

Have lots of flour handy. On a large flat countertop, sprinkle flour very liberally and dust a rolling pin with flour. Put lots of flour on your hands and take the dumpling dough out of the bowl. You'll need to keep putting flour on your hands and patting the dough ball to keep it from sticking to your hands. Place the dough ball on the counter and start rolling it out from top to bottom and side to side. After a couple of rolls, pick up the edges and shove more flour underneath (lots of flour is fine). Keep rolling out the dough until it is very, very thin (Aunt Margaret used to say "until you can read a newspaper through it"). Cut the dough into about 3" squares (I use the blunt edge of a dough scraper to keep from scoring my countertop). Pick up about 3-4 dumplings at a time and gently drop them one at a time into the simmering broth, keeping them flat. As you add the dumplings, keep pressing them down into the broth with a wooden spoon or spatula to immerse them in the broth. Stir a bit to keep the dumplings from sticking together. Continue with all the remaining dumpling squares. Once all the dumplings are in the broth, add the chicken meat back to the dumpling mixture and stir gently. Turn the heat down to a gentle simmer and cook, covered, for about 15 minutes, stirring every few

Recipe shared by the Bottger Mansion of Old Town, Albuquerque, New Mexico
110 San Felipe NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104 (505) 243-3639
www.bottger.com

minutes. The dumplings will want to stick to the bottom of the pot. As they cook, the dumplings will expand and absorb the broth. Most of the liquid should be gone.

Authentic Delaware chicken and dumplings (locally called “chicken and slicks”) have a gravy-like consistency. This is not a soup or a stew with the dumplings floating on top.

* This can take a big part of the afternoon to make, which may be why it’s usually served for Sunday dinner. It’s usually cooling the broth that holds you up, so if you want to get it done sooner, you can pour the broth into several large baking sheets with a rim (jelly roll pans). The large surface area will make it cool rapidly.