

Thin chicken breasts floured and fried then served in a lemony sauce with caramelized lemon slices, really pretty good.

Chicken Francese

By Julia Moskin

Total Time 35 minutes

Rating ★★★★★ (6,753)



Linda Xiao for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Monica Pierini.

Chicken francese, sometimes called chicken French, is one of those rare restaurant dishes that's truly easy to cook at home. If you can make chicken cutlets, you can make this lemony, buttery recipe; the only difference is an easy pan sauce that brightens the whole plate. This version includes lemon slices browned in butter, which are pretty and tasty but entirely optional. Although the name suggests that it's a French or Italian dish ("Francese" means French in Italian), it's actually neither: Like spaghetti and meatballs, it's a mostly Italian-American invention. Serve with something starchy to soak up every drop of the sauce; pasta is traditional.

INGREDIENTS

Yield: 4 servings

2 eggs
2 tablespoons whole milk
1 teaspoon salt, plus more for seasoning
½ teaspoon ground black pepper, plus more for seasoning
1 cup all-purpose flour
⅓ cup olive oil
⅓ cup vegetable oil
4 to 6 large boneless, skinless chicken cutlets (buy the cutlets thinly sliced, or buy regular boneless breasts and slice them in half horizontally to make thin pieces)
3 to 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 lemon, thinly sliced, seeds removed (optional)
½ cup dry white wine
Freshly squeezed juice of 1 lemon, more to taste
2 cups chicken stock
3 to 4 tablespoons freshly minced parsley

PREPARATION

Step 1

In a wide, shallow bowl, whisk eggs, milk, salt and pepper until blended. Place the flour in a separate bowl. Line a baking sheet with paper towels.

Step 2

In a wide skillet, heat olive and vegetable oils over medium heat until shimmering.

Step 3

Working in batches to avoid crowding the pan, lightly dredge the chicken in flour and shake off any excess. Dip into egg batter, let excess batter drip back into the bowl and place in the skillet. Fry, turning once, until golden brown on both sides, about 4 minutes per side. Adjust the heat as the cutlets cook so they brown slowly and evenly, with a steady bubbling. Transfer to the paper-towel-lined pan and repeat with remaining cutlets.

Step 4

When all cutlets are browned, remove the pan from the heat and pour off the oil. Wipe out the pan with paper towels. Return the pan to low heat.

Step 5

If making the lemon slices (if not, skip to Step 6 below): Melt 3 tablespoons of the butter and then scatter the lemon slices over the bottom of the pan. Cook, stirring gently occasionally, until the lemon slices are golden and browning around the edges, about 3 minutes. Scoop out the lemon slices and set them aside.

Step 6

Add 3 tablespoons of butter, the wine and lemon juice and bring to a boil. Boil until the liquid is syrupy, 3 to 4 minutes. Pour in the

stock, bring to a boil and cook until thickened into a sauce, about 5 minutes. (It will thicken more when you add the cutlets.) Taste and adjust the seasonings with lemon, salt and pepper; it should be quite lemony and not too salty.

Step 7

Reduce the heat, tuck the cutlets into the pan and simmer very gently until the sauce is velvety and the chicken pieces are heated through, about 4 minutes. Turn the cutlets over occasionally in the sauce. Place the browned lemon slices on top. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve, spooning some of the sauce over each serving.