



Menu du Jour

07 Jan 06

Cajun Roast Chicken
Andouille-Apple Dressing
Jalapeño Cornbread
Mashed Potatoes
Tarragon Buttered Carrots
(Serves four)

Cajun Roast Chicken

A great Sunday dinner! Roasted chicken seasoned with Cajun spices and served with andouille & apple cornbread dressing accompanied by velvety mashed potatoes and succulent cream gravy. Any leftover chicken could be used for a chicken & rice casserole, a chicken pot pie, or sliced for sandwiches.

1 (6 1/2-pound) roasting chicken
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons Cajun seasoning (recipe follows)
4 sprigs fresh thyme
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary
1 yellow onion, peeled and chopped
1 large carrot, peeled and chopped
1 rib celery, washed and chopped

Remove the giblets and neck from the chicken, reserve for future use. Pat the chicken dry and lightly coat the skin with olive oil. Liberally season the chicken, inside and out, with Cajun seasoning. Stuff the cavity with thyme, rosemary, onion, carrot, and celery.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Place the chicken on a rack in a large roasting pan and roast, basting occasionally with pan juices, for 2 to 2 1/2 hours or until the internal temperature in the thigh is 180 degrees F. (The breast temperature should be 160 degrees F.)

If the chicken begins to brown too quickly, lightly tent it with aluminum foil.

Remove the chicken from the oven, tent with aluminum foil, and allow it to rest for 10 to 15 minutes before carving.



Cajun Seasoning

This seasoning blend will keep stored in an airtight container about a month. It may also be used to season baked potatoes, vegetables, and a variety of meats. This is an excellent substitute for commercial seasoning blends that tend to have too much salt. (A 1/4 teaspoon of pure salt contains 600 mg of sodium; commercial spice blends often have as much as 300 mg of sodium for 1/4 teaspoon.)

5 tablespoons sweet paprika
1/4 cup coarse kosher salt
1/4 cup granulated garlic
2 tablespoons dried oregano
2 tablespoons dried thyme
2 tablespoons onion powder
2 tablespoons cracked black pepper
2 tablespoons ground cayenne pepper
2 tablespoons dried parsley

Combine ingredients in a medium mixing bowl until thoroughly combined.

Jalapeño Cornbread

3/4 cup all-purpose flour
2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
2 tablespoons granulated sugar
3/4 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
1 1/4 cups yellow corn meal
2 jalapeño chiles, seeded and finely chopped
1 egg
1 cup whole milk
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder, sugar, salt, cornmeal, and jalapeños. In another bowl, whisk together the egg, milk, and melted butter. Add the liquid to the dry ingredients and stir well to combine.

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F. Grease an 11-inch cast iron skillet and place it in the oven to heat. Pour the mixture into the hot skillet and bake for 20 minutes or until the bottom is brown and the top is firm.

(Chef's note: Make two batches, one for serving and one for the dressing below.)



Andouille-Apple Dressing

1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter
1 large yellow onion, peeled and diced
3 ribs celery, diced
2 to 3 unpeeled Granny Smith apples, cubed
8 ounces andouille sausage, casings removed and chopped
4 cups crumbled jalapeño cornbread (recipe above)
1 tablespoon dry rubbed sage
Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Melt the butter in a large skillet and sauté the onion, celery, and apple. Transfer to a large bowl. Crumble the andouille into the pan and cook until lightly browned; transfer to the mixing bowl.

Add the cornbread and sage to the mixing bowl. Season to taste with salt and pepper and stir well to combine. Spoon the dressing into a buttered casserole dish, cover with aluminum foil, and bake in a preheated 350 degrees F. oven for 30 minutes.

Mashed Potatoes

5 large Russet potatoes (about 10-ounces each)
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/4 cup sour cream
1/2 – 3/4 cup light cream, scalded
Coarse kosher salt and white pepper, to taste

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.

Wash and dry potatoes. Coat lightly with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Bake in a preheated oven for 1 hour or until easily pierced with a knife. Cool. Remove flesh from potatoes and mash. (The potato skins may be reserved for future use such as twice-baked potatoes or stuffed potato skins.)

Melt the butter in a medium stockpot over medium heat; add the potatoes and the sour cream to the pot. Mash to combine. Slowly add the scalded cream until the potatoes reach the desired consistency. (The potatoes will tighten as they cook.) Cook for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring often, until potatoes are very hot.



Cream Gravy

3 tablespoons pan drippings or shortening
1 tablespoon dried crushed rosemary
1 teaspoon granulated onion powder
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 1/2 cups whole milk
1/2 cup light cream
Coarse kosher salt, to taste
White pepper, to taste

Pour all the pan sauce into a small bowl. Measure and return 3 tablespoons to a medium saucepan. Heat the pan over medium heat and add the rosemary and onion powder. Stir in the flour and mix until well blended.

Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until bubbly. Gradually add the milk and cream; bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer until thickened and creamy, stirring constantly. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Tarragon Buttered Carrots

4 medium carrots, peeled
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 tablespoon fresh tarragon, chopped
2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
1/2 teaspoon clover honey
Coarse kosher salt, to taste

Using a crinkle cutter, bias-slice the carrots into 1/4-inch pieces. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, boil the carrots in salted water until crisp-tender, about 10 minutes.

Drain the carrots. Melt the butter in a saucepan, add the rest of the ingredients and stir together.

Toss the carrots in the flavored butter and heat until warmed.



Cooking & Presentation



Jalapeño Cornbread In The Skillet



Cajun Roasted Chicken



Plate Presentation