

Birds on Biscuits

When it comes to Southern classics, few things can top fried chicken or a warm, flaky buttermilk biscuit. Together, these staples are a powerhouse meal any time of day. Thomas Marlow, the executive chef of Mimosa Grill in Charlotte, North Carolina, says his restaurant has a love affair with fried chicken, serving it crisped in cast-iron for dinner, on a waffle for brunch, or as these chicken biscuits on their late-night bar menu. South Carolina native Sarah Simmons offers her playful take on the breakfast sandwich, whipping up a deviled egg sauce to top the fried bird.

—Lia Grabowski



SARAH SIMMONS' FRIED CHICKEN BISCUIT

SARAH SIMMONS OF RISE GOURMET GOODS AND BAKESHOP, COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

Note: Brine chicken one to two days in advance.

Special equipment: deep fry thermometer

For the dry brine:

- ½ cup celery salt
- ¼ cup black pepper
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 2 tablespoons cayenne
- 2 tablespoons onion powder
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 6 boneless chicken thighs

For the dredge:

- 1 pound flour
- 1½ ounces cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt

For assembly:

- Vegetable oil for frying
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- 6 biscuits (find a recipe at thelocalpalate.com)
- Spicy mayo (recipe page 122)

- Dill pickles
- Deviled egg sauce (recipe page 122)

1. Combine dry brine ingredients and toss with chicken thighs to coat. Allow chicken to brine in refrigerator for 24 to 48 hours.
2. Add 1 inch of oil to a cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine dredge ingredients and sift mixture to remove any lumps. In a separate bowl, whisk buttermilk and eggs until combined. Dip chicken thighs into buttermilk to coat, shake off extra liquid, then into the flour mixture, patting down gently to coat evenly and completely.
3. When oil reaches 350 degrees, slowly add breaded chicken. Fry on each side for 4 to 5 minutes or until internal temperature reaches 165 degrees. Thicker thighs can be finished in the oven on a rack over a sheet pan for 6 to 8 minutes.
4. Build each biscuit with spicy mayo, fried chicken, pickles, and deviled egg sauce. Serve immediately.

Serves 6

Simmons, the owner of Columbia's Rise Gourmet Goods and Bakeshop, refreshes the traditional egg sandwich with a deviled egg sauce. The key to Simmons' chicken is the brine, which is well worth the one- or two-day wait to keep the chicken juicy after frying.



MIMOSA GRILL'S FRIED CHICKEN BISCUIT

THOMAS MARLOW OF MIMOSA GRILL, CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

Note: Start pickles at least three days ahead of time and soak chicken a day before frying.

Special equipment: deep fry thermometer

- 4 (6-ounce) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut in half and soaked in a mixture of buttermilk and hot sauce (Texas Pete recommended) for 24 hours

For the rub:

- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons cumin
- 2 tablespoons black pepper

- 3 tablespoons paprika
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon cayenne

For the dredge:

- 1 cup Bob's Red Mill 1-to-1 gluten-free flour
- ½ cup corn starch
- ½ cup rice flour
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne

For honey hot sauce:

- ½ cup honey
- ½ cup hot sauce

For assembly:

- Peanut oil for frying
- Grandma T's buttermilk biscuits (recipe page 122)
- Cold and crisp pickles (recipe page 122)
- Carolina chow chow (recipe page 122)
- Brown sugar mayo (recipe page 122)

1. Remove chicken from spicy buttermilk and place onto a plate. In a small bowl, combine rub ingredients. Sprinkle chicken with rub and let rest for 2 hours.
2. In a small bowl, combine dredge ingredients. Lightly dust chicken with dredge, being sure to coat the pieces evenly but not over-flour. Let rest for 1 hour.
3. In a cast-iron skillet or dutch oven, heat oil (enough to cover chicken) to

Since a lot of resting time is involved in this recipe, Marlow suggests frying the chicken in advance. "The gluten-free dredge will keep it crispy until the next day in the refrigerator," he says, crediting Atlanta chef Todd Richards for the tip. As for Grandma T's biscuit recipe? It's named for Marlow's Grandma Theresa, "a phenomenal baker."



300 degrees. Working in batches, carefully lower chicken into oil and cook for 2½ minutes. Remove chicken to an elevated rack over a baking sheet and check that the internal temperature of each piece has reached 165 degrees. Return the oil to 300 degrees and repeat with remaining chicken pieces.

4. In a mixing bowl, combine honey and hot sauce. When ready to serve, toss chicken with sauce. Build each biscuit with crisp pickles, fried chicken, chow chow, and brown sugar mayo. Serve immediately.

Serves 8