

Chicken Casserole with Cider

Ingredients

12 rindless streaky bacon rashers
12 skinless and boneless chicken thighs
3 tbsp rapeseed oil
2 onions, cut into wedges
2 sweet potatoes or 1 small butternut squash, peeled and cut into cubes
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 tbsp plain flour
2 tbsp crab apple jelly
330ml bottle of bulmers
300ml (1/2 pint) chicken stock
1 tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1 tbsp toasted flaked almonds
salt and freshly ground black pepper
mashed potatoes, to serve

Method

Preheat the oven to 200C (400F/Gas 6). Stretch each rasher with the back of a table knife and then use to wrap around a chicken thigh. Heat the oil in a large casserole with a lid and cook the wrapped chicken thighs in batches until lightly browned all over. Arrange on a plate and set aside.

Reduce the heat, add the onions and sweet potatoes or butternut squash, then sauté for 5 minutes until golden. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute, stirring to prevent the mixture sticking. Stir the flour through to coat everything.

Add the crab apple jelly and then pour in cider and stock. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and return the chicken to the casserole. Cover and cook for 1 hour or until the chicken is completely tender and the sauce has thickened slightly. Season to taste.

To serve, sprinkle the casserole with the parsley and flaked almonds, then place directly on the table with a large bowl of mash to mop up all those delicious juices.