

Chicken Good for Budget

BY FAITH GILLESPIE
Queen of Heats

One day last week, I saw a food article that began like this:

"Checking the contents of your freezer sometimes brings forth surprises. A special treat might be lurking behind last week's leftover roast and vegetables such as a wild mallard or two..."

They've got to be kidding!

If I had a wild mallard or two lurking in my freezer, I'd know it.

No hunterly husband would let the wife forget it if he bagged a wild mallard or two.

After his sitting for all those gray hours in the chilly damp of a duck blind, and seeing them come in over the water, and drawing a bead with shooting with perfect timing and control... you are going to know that you've got a duck there, doll.

I wouldn't mind a furking mallard in my freezer, but it's hardly likely. The surprises in there are more apt to be like old macaroni and cheese. Besides that, the King of Heats in this household isn't hunterly.

What we do is we settle for chicken.

We don't mind a bit. Chicken used to be as hard to come by as duck, almost; it was the special Sunday dinner treat.

Now, however, the family that wants to make both ends meet makes one end chicken. It is plentiful and inexpensive, and there is no end to the tempting ways to prepare it.

The best bargain is usually the broiler-fryers. If you find the ones that weigh three pounds or more, and if you buy them whole. If no one ever showed you how to cut up a fowl, there are things to do with the whole bird. A 3 to 4-pound chicken can make two meals for 3 or 4 people. (You may use stewing chickens for these recipes, of course; you will pay more and get more meat.)

Cook the cleaned whole chicken in 3 quarts of water. Put into the pot with the bird an onion stuck with 3 cloves, a small carrot, a bay leaf, 5 or 6 peppercorns, a couple of sticks of celery with leaves, a little parsley if you have some, and a couple teaspoons salt. Bring to boil, skim off foam, cover pot, and simmer at reduced heat for a couple of hours (more for a stewer). Cool chicken in the broth. You can do this any time, and refrigerate the pot after it cools; or remove the meat from the bones, strain the broth, and refrigerate separately till you need it.

BROCCOLI AND BIRD

Cook as package directs: 1 package frozen broccoli, let drain and place on bottom of buttered baking dish.

While broccoli cooks, melt 1/4-cup butter in frying pan, and brown in it 1 small chopped onion, 2 stalks of finely chopped celery, and 2 cups of stale bread in small cubes. Season with 1/2-teaspoon salt, 1/2-teaspoon seasoned salt, 1/4-teaspoon MSG and maybe a teeny bit of ground sage. Sprinkle over this 1/4-cup shear, mix and spoon it onto the broccoli layer in the baking dish.

Top this with nice large pieces of chicken from legs and breast. Mix a can of cream of mushroom soup with half a can of milk and pour it over all. Sprinkle with grated parmesan cheese and bake in a 350 degree oven for 25 minutes, till bubbly and brown.

All the little pieces of meat off the bones go into the broth for a hearty soup for lunch or supper. Add salt and pepper, fresh or dried parsley and onion, and a handful of rice or noodles. Simmer 15 minutes or so. Serve with French bread and cheese.

If you do have a wild mallard or two, and want a recipe, let me know.



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