

TARHEEL KITCHEN

By MISS E. YORK KIKER

Ways to prepare chicken are as varied as the people doing the preparing. This truth was much in evidence at the National Chicken Cooking Contest held in Jackson Mississippi. The contest, sponsored by the National Broiler Council, the makers of Ac'cent flavor enhancer and Mazola corn oil, was hosted by the Mississippi Poultry Association.

It was a rare experience to be a part of the press to represent the North Carolina Department of Agriculture at the National contest. The event is staged each year to encourage the use of chicken and to demonstrate the variety of ways it can be served. Since North Carolina is fourth in the nation in broiler production, it is only natural that the State and National Contest receive major recognition.

It is difficult to describe the well-planned spectacle of 51 contestants, representing each state and the District of Columbia, preparing their chicken recipe in the Jackson Coliseum. A large crowd of spectators and food editors were on hand. Television cameras were in action and editors busily talked with contestants to secure stories. Contestants ranged in age from 17 to 82, with eleven being male. The 82-year-old male contestant was so busy being interviewed, it was hard to have a few words until the breakfast when the excitement had calmed to some degree. Imagine, if possible, attempting to cook for first place prize of 10,000 dollars while surrounded by a levy of talkative spectators.

Recipes showed a trend toward combining fresh vegetables with chicken more than in previous years. Another difference noted was less oven-baking and more stir-frying or other top-of-the-stove preparation. Reducing fuel bills may be a motive for the change. Most of the recipes called for parts of chicken but at home you can save money by purchasing whole broilers and cutting up your own.

From observing at the cook-off, a few tips seem worth passing along. Buy good equipment and learn how to use it. Select the proper knife for the job and keep it sharp. Use a cutting board, a vegetable scraper, and tongs for turning chicken; and other equipment to simplify cooking. Fortunately, there were not many accidents, but seeing food being sliced toward a person made one shudder.

A panel of qualified judges selected Mrs. Ann Costa, a 52-year-old grandmother from Georgia to receive first prize of \$10,000 for Chicken Ratatouille, a French word describing a stew or casserole which most frequently contains a well-seasoned combination of egg plant, zucchini, tomato and green pepper. Occasionally, meat is added, and chicken was the lucky choice for Mrs. Costa.

Placing second for \$4,000 was 27-year-old psychology professor Dr. Linda Walsh from Iowa for her chicken in Tomato-Wine Sauce recipe. Other winners sharing in a total of \$20,000 in prizes were: Mrs. Jane Matsumoto of Hawaii, who placed third for her recipe for Sesame Seed Chicken Wings; Mrs. Woni Fournier of Nebraska, fourth prize for Sesame Chicken a la Fournier; and Robert "Buck" Collier of Arizona, fifth, for Chicken Barbecue Bueno.

Homemaker - First Place

- CHICKEN RATATOUILLE**
- 1/4 cup Mazola corn oil
 - 2 whole broiler-fryer chicken breasts
 - 1 skinner, boned and cut in 1-inch pieces
 - 2 small zucchini squash, unpared and thinly sliced
 - 1 eggplant, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
 - 1/2 pound mushrooms, sliced
 - 1 can (16 oz.) tomato wedge
 - 2 teaspoons garlic salt
 - 1 teaspoon Ac'cent flavor enhancer
 - 1 teaspoon dried sweet basil, crushed
 - 1 teaspoon dried parsley
 - 1 teaspoon black pepper
 - 1 onion, thinly sliced
 - 1 medium green pepper, seeded and cut in 1-inch pieces

Heat corn oil in large fry pan. Add chicken and saute about 2 minutes on each side. Then add zucchini, eggplant, onion, green pepper, and mushrooms. Cook, stirring occasionally about 15 minutes or until tender crisp. Add tomatoes stirring carefully. Add garlic salt, flavor enhancer, basil, parsley and pepper. Simmer about 5 minutes or until fork can be inserted in chicken with ease. Serve chicken on large platter with mound of rice in center. Makes 4 servings.

Psychology Professor - Second Place

- CHICKEN IN TOMATO-WINE SAUCE**
- 1/4 cup Mazola corn oil
 - 1 broiler-fryer chicken, cut in parts
 - 1 cup chopped onion
 - 1 cup chopped celery
 - 1 cup peeled and chopped carrots
 - 1 can (6 oz.) tomato paste
 - 1 cup white wine
 - 2 teaspoons salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
 - 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1 teaspoon Ac'cent flavor enhancer
 - 1 can (16 oz.) tomatoes

Heat corn oil in dutch oven over medium heat. Add chicken and brown on all sides. Remove chicken; add onion, celery and carrots and saute 5 minutes. Bring sauce and vegetables to boil. Return chicken to pan. Bake in 350 degree oven, covered, about 1 1/2 hours or until fork can be inserted in chicken with ease. Serve with pasta. Makes 4 servings.

Teach-Masters Degree - Third Place

- SESAME SEED CHICKEN WINGS**
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
 - 1/4 cup flour
 - 1/4 cup sugar
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
 - 1 teaspoon Ac'cent flavor enhancer
 - 5 tablespoons soy sauce
 - 2 eggs
 - 2 stalks green onion, sliced
 - 2 cloves garlic, minced
 - 2 tablespoons sesame seeds
 - 3 cups (about) Mazola corn oil, divided
 - 3 pounds broiler-fryer chicken wings, (approx. 15) wing tips, discarded, cut at joint; loosen meat from one joint end. With sharp knife, push meat down over unloosened joint to form ball like drumstick.

In a bowl stir together cornstarch, flour, sugar, salt, flavor enhancer, soy sauce, eggs, green onion, garlic and sesame seeds. Stir in 1/4 cup of the corn oil. Add chicken; stir to cover all pieces. Marinate 2 hours. Heat corn oil in deep fryer or deep fry pan, adding oil to not more than one-third full. Heat corn oil over medium heat to 325 degrees. Carefully add chicken, a few pieces at a time. Fry 5 to 7 minutes or until a golden brown and fork can be inserted in chicken with ease on a test piece removed from oil. Makes four servings.

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