

Fabulous Food

Cider-Braised Chicken with Figs—Slow Cooker or Stove Top—It's Easy

(NAPSA)—Dust off that slow cooker or run to the store and buy one. Slow cooking is in style and easy. Imagine after a long day, opening the door to the alluring aroma of Cider Braised Chicken with Figs simmering in a rich velvety sauce. Simply add a steamed vegetable, rice or a loaf of crusty bread and dinner is ready.

Light golden-colored Calimyrna figs taste slightly nutty, while dark, more intensely flavored Mission figs are sweeter. Figs are versatile and rich in health-promoting antioxidants, complex carbohydrates, dietary fiber and a host of essential minerals including potassium, iron and calcium. So whether on the stove top, in the slow cooker, or straight out of the package, dried California figs are a must on your weekly shopping list.

For more recipes featuring Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice and Sun-Maid Figs, visit the Valley Fig Growers' Web site www.valleyfig.com or write to P.O. Box 1987, Fresno, CA 93718-1987.

Slow Cooked Cider-Braised Chicken with Figs

- 2 teaspoons *each* butter and vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, cut into thin wedges (2 cups)
- 1 package (9 ounces) Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Calimyrna or Mission Figs
- 4 teaspoons finely chopped fresh ginger
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme (or 1½ teaspoons fresh thyme)
- 3 pounds chicken pieces, skinned
- ½ teaspoon *each* salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1¼ cups apple cider or apple juice
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice



This aromatic Cider-Braised Chicken with Figs uses flavorful dried California figs.

Fresh thyme or parsley, optional

In a large, nonstick skillet, heat butter and vegetable oil. Add onion and cook over medium-low heat until golden. Remove from heat. Spoon onion into medium bowl. Cut stems from figs; cut each fig in half. Stir figs, ginger and thyme into onions; set aside. Add chicken to skillet. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Brown chicken over medium-high heat. Pour apple cider into bottom of slow cooker. Add half of onion-fig mixture. Top with chicken pieces and remaining fig mixture. Cover pot with lid. Cook on LOW setting for 5 to 6 hours. Remove chicken, onions and figs to serving platter, reserving cooking liquid in pot. Add lemon juice to liquid. Thicken if desired.* Spoon sauce over chicken. Garnish with fresh thyme or parsley. Makes 6 servings.

*To thicken cooking liquid, bring to a boil (in small

saucepan or in slow cooker on HIGH). Mix 1 tablespoon cornstarch with 1 tablespoon apple cider. Add to simmering liquid and stir for 1 minute or until thickened.

Cider-Braised Chicken with Figs (stove top)

- 2 teaspoons *each* butter and vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, cut into thin wedges
- 4 teaspoons finely chopped fresh ginger
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 3 pounds chicken pieces, skinned
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 package (9 ounces) Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Calimyrna or Mission Figs
- 1½ cups apple cider or apple juice
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme (or 1½ teaspoons fresh thyme)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Fresh thyme or parsley for garnish

In large, nonstick skillet, heat butter and oil. Add onion, ginger and pepper. Cook over medium-low heat until onions are golden. Remove and reserve. Add chicken to skillet, sprinkle with salt. Cook until golden on all sides. Cut stems from figs; cut each fig in half. Add onion mixture, figs, apple cider and thyme to skillet; cover. Simmer until chicken is tender. Turn once during cooking. Remove chicken, onions and figs to serving platter or plates. Over medium heat, add lemon juice to pan. Cook and stir until sauce thickens slightly; spoon over chicken. Garnish with fresh thyme. Makes 6 servings.