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**Chicken and Sausage Cassoulet**

This chicken and sausage cassoulet recipe is a modern update on the classic white bean cassoulet from Toulouse. This version evokes particularly complex and developed flavors by cooking certain ingredients separately, and then together. The result is an irresistible, hearty stew.

**Prep Time:** 25 minutes

**Cook Time:** 4 hours

**Total Time:** 4 hours, 25 minutes

**Ingredients:**

* 1 pounds dried white beans, soaked, sorted, and rinsed
* 1 teaspoon salt
* 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
* 1 pound lardons (bacon strips)
* 2 large white onions, peeled, halved, and cut into
* 1 pound bulk pork sausage
* 1 1/2 pounds boneless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch pieces
* 1 pound chicken legs
* 2 pounds tomatoes, seeded and chopped
* 1 cup dry white wine
* 1 quart chicken stock
* 1 bouquet garni
* 3 cloves garlic, chopped
* 1 tablespoon tomato paste
* 3/4 teaspoon salt
* 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
* 2 carrots, peeled and cut crosswise into 1/4-inch slices
* 1/2 cup bread crumbs
* 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh parsley
* 1/2 teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme
* 4 teaspoons melted butter

**Preparation:**

Place the beans in a large saucepan and cover them with cold water. Bring the beans to a gentle simmer over medium heat. Cover and cook them until they begin to turn tender, about 1 hour and 15 minutes. Add 1 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper to the beans and cook until the liquid has absorbed, about 25 additional minutes. Remove the beans from the heat, drain and discard any additional liquid, and set the beans aside.

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook the lardons for 5 minutes, until they turn brown. Transfer them to a plate. Add the onions to the pan and sauté them for 10 minutes, until they turn light golden brown. Transfer them to the plate with the lardons. Brown the sausage and transfer it to a bowl.

Preheat the oven to 350F. Drain all but 4 tablespoons of the fat from the skillet. Add the chicken breast pieces to the fat and brown them over medium-high heat. Transfer the chicken to the bowl with the sausage. Brown the chicken legs in the skillet and transfer them to the bowl.

Combine the lardons, onions, sausage, chicken pieces and legs, tomatoes, wine, chicken stock, bouquet garni, garlic, tomato paste, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper in a large casserole dish. Cover with a lid or foil, and bake the casserole for 25 minutes. Add the carrots to the casserole, cover, and bake for an additional 20 minutes.

Add the reserved white beans to the hot casserole and gently stir the mixture. In a small bowl, toss the bread crumbs, parsley, and thyme with the melted butter. Sprinkle the seasoned bread crumbs over the casserole and bake it, uncovered, for 1 hour. Discard the bouquet garni and serve the cassoulet hot.

This chicken and sausage cassoulet recipe makes 12 large servings.

Source: About.Com French Food