



SWEET TEA BRINED FRIED CHICKEN

INGREDIENTS

For the Brine

- 6 cups water
- 8 bags black tea
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup kosher salt

For the Chicken

- 4 chicken legs, skin on
- 4 chicken thighs, bone-in and skin on
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon hot sauce
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 1/2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons onion powder
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 3 cups vegetable oil

DIRECTIONS

Bring the water to boil in a large pot. When it boils, remove from heat and add the tea bags, cover, and steep for 20 minutes. Gently squeeze the bags to extract as much flavor as possible and remove them. Stir in the sugar and salt until they have dissolved. Leave uncovered for an hour or until it reaches room temperature. Place a gallon freezer-style resealable bag in a large bowl and open it up. Carefully pour the room temperature tea brine into the bag. Place the chicken into the bag, and seal it. Refrigerate overnight (minimum 8 hours) or up to 24 hours.

Combine the buttermilk and the hot sauce in a medium bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, cornmeal, cornstarch, garlic powder, onion powder, black pepper, salt, cayenne pepper, and paprika. Remove chicken from the brine and dunk it in the buttermilk, turning the piece to coat it. Then coat the chicken in the flour mix, turning to coat completely. Discard the brine when done.

Add the oil into an 11-inch cast iron skillet, or Dutch oven. Heat the oil to 375°F. Working in batches, add the chicken pieces to the hot oil in the pan and fry on one side for 12-15 minutes, until golden brown, and then use tongs to turn the pieces over and fry for another 10-12 minutes, again until golden brown. Move to a serving platter and sprinkle with flaky sea salt. Serve immediately.

SERVES 4