

Herbal Chicken in Lotus Leaves Recipe

Ingredients: Serves 4

1 chicken, preferably free-range chicken weighing 1.2-1.4 kg
1 tablespoon Chinese rice wine
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground white pepper
8 dried chestnuts, cleaned and parboiled for 10 minutes
2 or 3 large dried lotus leaves, pre-soaked
aluminum foil (2 large sheets)

Stock ingredients:

400 ml chicken stock
30 g Codonopsis root (tong sum)
15 g Chinese angelica (tong kwai)
20 g Soloman's seal (yoke chok)
15 g Chinese wolfberries (kei chi)
15 pitted dried red dates (hong choh)

Seasoning ingredients:

1 tablespoon cornstarch mixed with 2 tablespoons water
½ tablespoon (5 g) rock sugar
2-3 drops of dark soy sauce
1 tablespoon light soy sauce
2 tablespoons or to taste Chinese rice wine
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon oyster sauce
½ teaspoon salt or to taste
1 teaspoon ground white pepper

Method:

Clean chicken and pat dry with paper towels and season with Chinese wine, salt and pepper. Cover and leave refrigerated for at least 3 hours. In the meantime, combine all the stock ingredients in a pot and bring to the boil. Lower heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Remove stock from heat and stir in the seasoning ingredients and leave to cool. Line a deep heatproof (flameproof) bowl large enough for the chicken and herbal stock with a large sheet of aluminum foil (make it 2 layers if possible, to avoid leakage). Then place 2 lotus leaves on top and add chicken, cooled herbal stock (and parboiled chestnuts (some placed inside the cavity)). Wrap the chicken and stock with stock leaves into a parcel (fold in left and right sides, then fold up lower edge and fold down upper edge). Wrap lotus leaf package with the foil to secure and prevent the stock from spilling out. Place foil parcel into a steaming tray and steam over rapidly boiling water for an hour. Serve warm with steamed white rice.