



INGREDIENTS

- 1kg chicken wings (see below*)
- 50g cooking salt
- 2 cups plain flour
- Vegetable oil, for deep-frying

Fried Chicken Spice Blend

- 3 teaspoons coriander seeds
- 3 teaspoons white peppercorns
- 1½ teaspoons cumin seeds
- 1½ teaspoons fennel seeds
- 1½ teaspoons salt flakes

Hot Dipping Sauce

- 1 cup whole-egg mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons hot smoked paprika
- Hot sauce, to taste

Cool Dipping Sauce

- 1 cup natural yoghurt
- 1 cup fresh soft herb leaves, finely chopped

* Buy good organic chicken wings like the ones from Eugowra Game Birds.

Southern Fried Chicken Wings

The Colonel may have had 11 secret herbs and spices, but these chicken wings taste just as good with only four! The secret to flavour is salt ... and soaking these wings (or any poultry) in brine makes a world of difference, just not too long for small pieces like wings or they become too salty. The other trick, which I learned from chicken maestro Morgan McGlone of Belles Hot Chicken, is to leave the chicken and flour together long enough for the moisture from the chicken to help build up a thick coating, almost like a batter, overnight is best if time permits. I serve these wings with two different dipping sauces, a smoky spicy one and a cooling herbal one; I use salad burnet for the herbal one because it's growing in my garden and has a lovely cucumber flavour, but parsley, coriander, mint, chervil or a combination of your favourite soft herbs will work just as well. These make a great snack anytime, or add a spicy coleslaw to turn them into a meal for 4. And for a delicious wine match, try Alfardon Tinto, a great Spanish red (perfect lightly chilled) from Sarah and Iwo at Si Vintners.

Serves 6 or more as a snack

METHOD

1. Cut wings into mini-drums and mid wings (freeze the wing tips for stock).
2. Dissolve salt in 500ml cold water.
3. Place chicken in a lidded container and cover with the water, adding more water and salt if needed to completely cover the chicken; use 10g salt for every 100ml of water.
4. Cover and refrigerate for about 2 hours.
5. Make Spice Blend: combine all ingredients in a spice grinder and blitz into a fine powder.
6. Mix Spice Blend and flour in a large bowl.
7. Remove chicken from brine, add to bowl and toss well to coat each piece. Cover bowl and refrigerate chicken and flour for at least 4 hours (preferably overnight).
8. Remove from fridge and set aside for 30 minutes or so to come to room temperature.
9. Heat oil for deep-frying.
10. Toss chicken in the flour again to add a firm dry coating.
11. Fry chicken in batches for about 7 minutes (mini-drums may need a little longer than mid-wings), stirring occasionally until just cooked through.
12. Drain on paper towel until all chicken is cooked.
13. Serve immediately with Hot Dipping Sauce and Cool Dipping Sauce.