



### **Eastern NC Chicken Pastry**

This dish was traditionally made with a whole chicken and was very high in fat. I have updated the recipe to reduce the fat and increase the richness of the broth to compensate. Although the dish is quite easy to make, it requires a finesse of assembly that is best suited to side by side learning or pictures to indicate textures and details. Making and dropping the pastry takes about 20 minutes. The dish/stew will serve 6-8 people. Children love it.

The pastry dough has nothing but flour and water and so must be handled lightly to avoid development of gluten. I learned this from my mother who learned it from her mother who learned it from her mother. It is a time honored classic and a means to feed 11 children with one bird and a portion of flour. A recipe for hard times and empty bellys.

The key to this dish is the rich, savory broth. Start with one gallon of cold water. Add three chicken breasts with attached wings, bones and skin. Add one tablespoon each of pepper, celery salt, and sea salt. Add one teaspoon of onion powder and 3 chicken bouillon cubes. Set to a low simmer and stew chicken for two hours, uncovered. The broth will reduce to 1/2 gallon. (Resist the temptation to add more water. The quantity of flour used requires all of the salt recommended to achieve the full flavor of the dish.) Remove breasts and wings and set broth aside for addition of pastry. Discard wings and reserve breasts for deboning and return to the pot.

The shoe peg corn is added to balance the saltiness of the dish. yellow corn may be used, but white shoe peg is preferred. An acidic side dish cuts the richness of the dish and a light macerated cucumber and tomato is recommended. Collards or other greens dressed with vinegar are also excellent accompaniments.



Measure 2 cups unbleached self-rising flour and 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour in a large bowl.

Add 2 cups of water and stir to make a shaggy, wet dough.



Cut the dough into four pieces and dredge in regular flour and set aside.



Roll one portion at a time, turning halfway through, to 1/8 inch sheet.

Flour board liberally so that dough does not stick.





You locate a spot where the broth is rolling through and lay the next piece of pastry over the rupture. This coats each noodle with fresh broth.



When all of the pastry is added, stir the pot and it will show some of the pastry pieces are nearly done while others are raw. They will all become semi-translucent when they are done. While the pot simmers on low for ten minutes debone the 3 chicken breasts used for the broth.



Add the boned chicken and 1 cup of yellow or shoe peg corn. Stir and simmer another five minutes. Serve with collards or other greens and Sweet Tea.