

# CHICKEN, LEEK AND MUSHROOM CASSEROLE

MARTHA STEWART LIVING -- JANUARY 2009



- \* 1 1/2 lbs boneless skinless chicken breast halves (about 2 large)
- \* 5 T extra-virgin olive oil
- \* 1 leek, white & pale-green parts only
- \* 1 celery stalk, cut into 1/2" dice
- \* 10 oz cremini mushrooms, halved if large
- \* 2 T chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- \* 1/3 cup finely grated parmesan cheese

- \* 3 T all-purpose flour
- \* 3 T dry sherry
- \* 2 1/2 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- \* 3/4 cup whole milk
- \* 1 dried bay leaf
- \* 8 slices dense multigrain bread, crusts removed  
slices cut into triangles

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F. Season chicken on both sides with salt and pepper. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a medium saute pan over medium-high heat. Add chicken, and cook until golden brown on 1 side, 3-4 minutes. Flip, reduce heat to medium, and cook until cooked through, about 10 min more. Transfer chicken to a plate, and return pan, with drippings, to medium heat.
2. Heat remaining 3 T of oil in pan. Add leek, celery, mushrooms and a pinch of salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are golden brown and tender, 8-10 min. (Reduce heat if vegetables brown too quickly.) Stir in flour, and cook, stirring often, for 2 min. Add sherry, stock, milk & bay leaf, and cook, scraping up browned bits from bottom, until thickened, about 5 minutes. Season with salt & pepper. Discard bay leaf.
3. Arrange bread on bottom of a 2-quart oval baking dish, overlapping pieces slightly. Spoon half of the vegetables and sauce over bread. Slice chicken crosswise, 1/2 thick, and arrange on bread. Top w/any accumulated juices from chicken. Spread remaining vegetables and sauce over chicken, sprinkle with parsley and Parmesan, and bake until golden brown & bubbling, 25-30 min. Let stand for 15 min. before serving.