

Chicken, Baby Artichoke & Spinach Casserole

written by The Recipe Exchange | June 13, 2015

Ingredients

- 2 Ounces Baby Spinach
- 2 Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breasts
- 2 Cloves Garlic
- 2 Ounces Gouda Cheese
- 1 Bunch Parsley
- 1 Yellow Onion
- 4 Baby Artichokes
- 1 Tablespoon White Wine Vinegar
- 1 Cup Low-Fat Milk
- 2 Tablespoons Butter
- 3 Tablespoons Flour
- 1 Teaspoon Hungarian Paprika
- $\frac{1}{4}$ Cup Grated Parmesan Cheese
- 2 Ounces Egg Noodles
- $\frac{1}{4}$ Cup Panko Breadcrumbs

Directions

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Wash and dry the fresh produce. Heat a medium pot of salted water to boiling on high. Roughly chop the spinach. Peel and mince the garlic. Grate the Gouda cheese. Pick the parsley leaves off the stems; discard the stems and roughly chop the leaves. Peel and small dice the onion. Cut the chicken into bite-sized pieces.

Trim away and discard the very end of the baby artichoke stems. Trim off the top inch of the artichokes (enough to remove the pointed, sharp tops). Peel off the tough outer leaves until you reach the tender middle leaves. Using a paring knife, cut off the outer skin of the stems. Cut the artichokes in half lengthwise and add to a bowl of cold water along with the white wine vinegar.

Once the water is boiling, add the egg noodles and cook 3 to 4 minutes, or until almost completely tender. Remove from heat, reserve $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of pasta water then drain the noodles thoroughly. Transfer the noodles to a bowl. Wipe out the pan.

Season the chicken with salt and pepper. In a large pan, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the chicken to the pan and cook 2 to 3 minutes, or until the chicken is about halfway cooked through. Add the artichokes and onions. Cook, stirring frequently, 2 to 3 minutes, or until the onions have softened and the chicken is cooked through. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

In the same pot used to cook the pasta, melt the butter on medium. Add the

garlic and cook, stirring frequently, 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until fragrant. Add the flour and cook, stirring constantly, 1 minute, or until golden. Gradually add the milk, whisking constantly, until combined and no lumps remain. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat to low and simmer, whisking constantly, 3 to 4 minutes, or until thickened. Add the spinach, paprika, Gouda and Parmesan cheeses. Whisk until the cheeses are completely melted. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste.

To the pot of béchamel, add the chicken and vegetables. Rinse the cooked noodles under cold water to loosen them then add to the pot. Stir to combine. (If the sauce seems too thick, add up to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the reserved pasta water to thin it out.) Transfer the chicken-noodle mixture to a medium baking dish. In a small bowl, toss the panko breadcrumbs with a drizzle of olive oil. Evenly sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture over the casserole. Bake 8 to 10 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from oven and let stand for about 2 minutes before serving. Garnish with the parsley. Enjoy!