

CHEF SARA RHODES

RED WINE BRAISED STUFFED CHICKEN THIGHS

- 4 oz. mild Italian sausage, casing remove and meat crumbled
- ½ cup fresh breadcrumbs, preferably from crust less French bread
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 Tbsp. minced shallots
- 1 large egg
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh oregano
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
- Salt and pepper
- 8 large skinless boneless chicken thighs, trimmed and pounded
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- ¼ cup chopped pancetta
- ¾ cup finely chopped onion
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 cups cremini mushrooms, quartered
- 1 750-ml bottle of red wine, preferably a blend such as 14 Hands Hot to Trot
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups canned crushed tomatoes with added puree
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- 2 Tbsp. butter



Mix first 9 ingredients in a medium bowl. Place chicken thighs on work surface and fill each area where bone was removed with 2 Tbsp. stuffing. Wrap chicken thighs around filling and tie with kitchen twine to hold together. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat oil in a large heavy skillet over medium high heat. Add pancetta and sauté until pancetta is light brown and fat is rendered, about 5 minutes. Remove pancetta to paper towel to drain. Add chicken thighs to skillet and cook until golden on all sides. Transfer to a plate. Add onion, garlic and mushrooms. Sauté until onion is soft. Return pancetta to skillet. Add wine and boil until mixture is reduce to 2 cups, about 12 minutes. Add stock, tomatoes, bay leaf and basil and chicken thighs. Bring to a boil again then reduce heat and simmer uncovered until chicken is cooked through, about 20 to 30 minutes.

Transfer chicken to a plate and cover to keep warm. Simmer sauce in skillet until slightly thickened and reduced, about 10 minutes. Add butter. Discard bay leaf. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Spoon some of the mushroom mixture on a plate. Slice the chicken thighs and fan out on top of mushroom mixture.