

la madeleine chicken friand recipe

La Madeleine Chicken Friand Recipe

La Madeleine is a beloved French café and bakery chain known for its delicious pastries and comforting dishes. Among its many offerings, the Chicken Friand stands out as a delightful savory pastry that combines tender chicken, rich flavors, and flaky pastry. This article will guide you through the process of making your own Chicken Friand at home, complete with tips, variations, and a step-by-step recipe. Whether you're hosting a brunch, planning a picnic, or simply craving a taste of France, this Chicken Friand recipe will surely impress.

Understanding the Chicken Friand

The Chicken Friand is a classic French dish that is essentially a savory pie wrapped in a flaky pastry crust. Traditionally, it includes a filling made of cooked chicken, vegetables, and sometimes cheese, all encased in puff pastry. The result is a golden-brown, crispy exterior that gives way to a warm, flavorful filling.

Origin of Friands

The term "friand" is derived from the French word for "tasty" or "delicious." Friands are often associated with the regions of France where they are enjoyed as appetizers or snacks. While the Chicken Friand is popular, other variations include seafood or vegetable fillings. The versatility of this dish makes it a favorite among home cooks and chefs alike.

Ingredients for Chicken Friand

To create the perfect Chicken Friand, you will need the following ingredients:

For the Pastry

- 1 package (14 oz) of puff pastry (thawed if frozen)
- 1 egg (for egg wash)

For the Filling

- 2 cups cooked chicken (shredded or diced)
- 1 cup mushrooms (sliced)
- 1 cup spinach (fresh or frozen, wilted and drained)
- 1/2 cup onion (finely chopped)
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1/2 cup cream cheese (softened)
- 1/2 cup shredded cheese (such as Gruyère or cheddar)
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (for cooking)

Preparation Steps

Now that you have gathered all the ingredients, let's dive into the preparation process for the Chicken Friand.

Step 1: Prepare the Filling

1. Sauté the Vegetables:

- In a skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat.
- Add the chopped onions and minced garlic, cooking until translucent (about 3-5 minutes).
- Add the sliced mushrooms and cook until they are softened and any moisture has evaporated.
- If using fresh spinach, add it to the skillet and cook until wilted. If using frozen spinach, ensure it is fully thawed and drained before adding.

2. Combine Ingredients:

- In a large mixing bowl, combine the cooked chicken, sautéed vegetables, cream cheese, shredded cheese, Dijon mustard, dried thyme, salt, and pepper. Mix until all ingredients are well combined.

Step 2: Prepare the Pastry

1. Roll Out the Puff Pastry:

- Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C).
- On a lightly floured surface, roll out the puff pastry to about 1/8-inch thickness.
- Cut the pastry into rectangles (approximately 4x6 inches).

2. Fill the Pastry:

- Place a generous spoonful of the filling on one half of each pastry rectangle.
- Be sure to leave a border around the edges to allow for sealing.

3. Seal the Pastry:

- Fold the other half of the pastry over the filling to create a pocket.
- Press the edges together with your fingers, then use a fork to crimp the edges for a decorative touch and to ensure they are sealed.

Step 3: Egg Wash and Bake

1. Prepare the Egg Wash:

- In a small bowl, beat the egg with a tablespoon of water.
- This will give your friands a beautiful golden color when baked.

2. Apply the Egg Wash:

- Brush the tops of the sealed friands with the egg wash.

3. Bake:

- Place the friands on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

- Bake in the preheated oven for about 25-30 minutes, or until they are puffed and golden brown.

Serving Suggestions

Once your Chicken Friands are baked to perfection, it's time to serve them! Here are some suggestions for enjoying this delicious dish:

- As an Appetizer: Serve warm with a side of dipping sauce, such as a tangy mustard or a homemade aioli.
- Accompanied by Salad: Pair the friands with a fresh green salad dressed with vinaigrette for a light lunch or dinner.
- For Breakfast or Brunch: Chicken Friands make a great addition to any brunch spread, served alongside fresh fruit or pastries.

Variations of Chicken Friand

Feel free to get creative and customize your Chicken Friand with different ingredients. Here are some variations to consider:

- Vegetable Friand: Substitute the chicken with a mix of your favorite vegetables, such as bell peppers, zucchini, or leeks.
- Seafood Friand: Use cooked shrimp or crab meat instead of chicken for a seafood twist.
- Herbed Friand: Add fresh herbs like parsley, dill, or basil to enhance the flavor profile.

Tips for Perfecting Your Chicken Friand

To ensure your Chicken Friand turns out perfectly every time, consider the following tips:

- Thaw Puff Pastry Properly: Always thaw your puff pastry in the refrigerator overnight for best results.
- Don't Overfill: Be careful not to overfill the pastries, as this can cause them to burst during baking.
- Experiment with Flavors: Don't hesitate to experiment with different cheeses, spices, or sauces in your filling.

Conclusion

Making La Madeleine Chicken Friands at home is not only satisfying but also a delightful way to bring a taste of France into your kitchen. With flaky pastry and a savory filling, these friands are perfect for any occasion, whether it be a cozy gathering or an elegant brunch. By following the recipe outlined in this article, you'll create a dish that is sure to impress your family and friends, leaving them craving more. So roll up your sleeves, gather your ingredients, and get ready to enjoy the delightful flavors of homemade Chicken Friands!

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main ingredients in a La Madeleine Chicken Friand?

The main ingredients include cooked chicken, cream cheese, puff pastry, onions, and seasonings such as garlic and thyme.

How long does it take to prepare a La Madeleine Chicken Friand?

Preparation time is approximately 20 minutes, and baking time is around 25-30 minutes, making the total time about 50 minutes.

Can I use leftover chicken for the Chicken Friand?

Yes, leftover rotisserie chicken or any cooked chicken works perfectly for this recipe.

What can I serve with La Madeleine Chicken Friand?

It pairs well with a light salad, steamed vegetables, or a side of mashed potatoes.

Is it possible to make Chicken Friands ahead of time?

Yes, you can prepare them ahead of time and freeze them before baking. Just add a few extra minutes to the baking time if baking from frozen.

What type of cheese is best for Chicken Friands?

Cream cheese is typically used, but you can also add shredded cheddar or mozzarella for extra flavor.

Can I make Chicken Friands gluten-free?

Yes, you can use gluten-free puff pastry or a gluten-free alternative for the dough.

How do I ensure my Chicken Friands are golden brown?

Brush the tops with an egg wash (beaten egg) before baking to achieve a golden, shiny finish.

What is the best way to store leftover Chicken Friands?

Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat in the oven for best results.

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