

**Fried Chicken Breasts with
Honey-Pecan Sauce
Iceberg Lettuce Salad
Deep South Peach Cake**



You don't have to live in the South to practice the tradition of Southern hospitality. It's true that much of the South has grown and changed, but a warm welcome is a Southern tradition that remains. True Southern hostesses are always prepared with sweet tea and a "little something to eat" to offer their guests. This week's menu highlights some old Southern favorites with updated twists. The meal begins with Fried Chicken Breasts with Honey-Pecan Sauce. Fried chicken is about as Southern of a dining tradition as there is! This version features boneless chicken breast halves that are marinated overnight in buttermilk and hot sauce; battered and fried; and topped with a luscious sauce of honey, chopped pecans, and Creole mustard. The chicken is accompanied by an old-fashioned Iceberg Lettuce Salad topped with tomatoes and bacon and drizzled with blue cheese dressing. Dessert is a scrumptious family favorite - Deep South Peach Cake. Ya'll enjoy, you hear!

**Fried Chicken Breasts
with Honey-Pecan Sauce**

For the Chicken:

8 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
2 cups buttermilk
7 dashes hot sauce
1-1/2 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
Vegetable oil for frying

Place the chicken breasts in a large glass bowl. Combine the buttermilk and hot sauce and pour over the chicken. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Drain the chicken breasts and discard the marinade. Combine flour, salt, pepper, and cayenne pepper in a large bowl. Add the chicken breasts, one at a time, shaking to coat well. Set aside. Heat 3 inches of oil in a Dutch oven. Add several of the chicken breasts, being careful not to crowd them. Fry on one side for several minutes, until golden. Turn and fry on the other side. Cook until chicken breasts are completely cooked through. An instant-read thermometer will read 170 degrees when the chicken is done. Repeat the process until all chicken breasts are cooked. Keep chicken warm in a 200 degree oven while sauce is being prepared.

For the Honey-Pecan Sauce:

1-1/2 cups chopped pecans
12 ounces honey
3/4 cup Creole mustard
2 teaspoons hot sauce

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and heat through. Place the chicken breasts on a serving platter and drizzle with the sauce. Serves 8.

Iceberg Lettuce Salad

3/4 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 cup buttermilk
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
1-1/2 teaspoons garlic powder Salt
Freshly ground black pepper
6 ounces crumbled blue cheese
1 large head iceberg lettuce, cored, and cut into 6 wedges
1 large ripe tomato, diced
6 strips of bacon, cooked, drained, and crumbled

Combine mayonnaise, sour cream, buttermilk, cider vinegar and garlic powder in a blender. Pour into a bowl, fold in blue cheese, and season with salt and pepper. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Place lettuce wedges on chilled salad plates and drizzle with the dressing. Top with diced tomato and crumbled bacon. Serves 6.

Deep South Peach Cake

1 (18.25-ounce) package yellow cake mix
3 eggs
1 (16-ounce) can peaches, undrained
1/2 cup light brown sugar
1 stick butter, melted
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk

Combine cake mix, eggs, and undrained peaches in a mixing bowl. Pour into a lightly greased and floured 9x13-inch baking dish. Sprinkle with brown sugar. Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. In a medium saucepan, combine butter, sugar, and milk. Heat until boiling. Pour boiled ingredients over hot cake. Cool 10 minutes before serving. Serve warm or cold. Serves 12.

The writer owns Catering by Debbi Covington and is the author of the cookbook, Dining Under the Carolina Moon. Debbi's website address is www.cateringbydebbicovington.com. She may be reached at 525-0350 or by email at covingtoncats@embarqmail.com.