



Chicken in Tomato & Olive Braise ***Pairs with Mirassou® California Pinot Noir***

Preparation time, 15 minutes
Cooking time, 30 minutes

6 chicken thighs, 5-6 ounces each
2 teaspoons kosher salt, more to taste
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 tablespoons olive oil
3 cloves garlic, sliced about 1/8th inch thick
1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
1 pinch hot pepper flakes, or to taste
½ teaspoon ground fennel seed
¼ cup Mirassou Pinot Noir
1 large can (1 pound 12 ounces) excellent quality diced tomatoes in juice
2 teaspoons brine-packed capers, rinsed
1 cup whole pitted green olives, rinsed
1 ounce Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, shaved with a vegetable peeler
1 loose cup whole parsley leaves, plucked from the stem

Preheat an oven to 325 degrees. Select a 3 to 4 quart oven-safe baking dish, and set it aside. Heat a large, heavy skillet over a medium-high burner. While the pan is heating, season the chicken with the salt and freshly ground black pepper. Add the olive oil to the skillet, allow it to heat through, then add the chicken pieces skin-side down. Cook until crisp and golden, about 5 minutes, then turn and brown equally on the other side, about 4 minutes. Remove the chicken to a plate.

Pour off all but about 2 tablespoons of the fat from the skillet, and return it to the stovetop over medium heat. Add the garlic and onion, and stir often for 3 minutes, or until it smells sweet. Stir in the pepper flakes and fennel. Deglaze with the wine, stirring against the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon to release the browned juices. Add the tomatoes, capers and olives, and bring the skillet to a simmer. Cook for five minutes, stirring occasionally. Adjust the seasoning to taste, then pour the tomato mixture into the oven-safe baking dish. Arrange the chicken pieces over the tomato mixture, skin-side up, and sprinkle the shaved cheese over the chicken. Place the baking dish on the center rack of the oven and cook for 10 minutes, or until a thermometer reads 160 degrees in the center of the largest piece of chicken.

Garnish the dish with parsley leaves and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Serve with soft polenta or your favorite short pasta, and a crisp green salad.

Serves 6