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Creole Fried Chicken

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Serves 4-6

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon salt, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon black pepper, or to taste
- 1½ teaspoons paprika
- 1½ teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 (3- to 4-pound) frying chicken, cut into pieces
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- ½ cup evaporated milk or half-and-half
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup finely crushed cracker meal or fine dried bread crumbs
- Peanut or vegetable oil, for shallow-frying



PREPARATION

1. In a small bowl, combine the salt, pepper, paprika, and garlic powder. Place the chicken on a board and pat dry with paper towels. Place the chicken in a large bowl. Sprinkle with half the seasoning mixture. Use your hands to rub the chicken with the seasonings, turning to coat evenly on all sides.
2. In a small bowl, combine the eggs, evaporated milk, and 1 cup water. Pour the mixture over the chicken and mix well to thoroughly coat. Refrigerate for 1 to 2 hours to allow the flavors to soak into the chicken.
3. In a small paper bag, combine the flour, cracker crumbs, and the remaining seasoning mixture. Add the chicken to the bag, a few pieces at a time. Close the bag and shake to coat the pieces well. Remove the chicken to a wire rack to rest for 20 minutes.
4. Pour about ¾ inch oil into a heavy deep cast-iron skillet and heat to 375°F over medium-high heat. (Use a thermometer, or if a small cube of bread sizzles immediately but does not burn when dropped into the pan, the oil is ready.) Adjust the heat to maintain this temperature as needed. Working in batches of a few pieces at a time (do not crowd the skillet), add the chicken and cook until golden brown, about 12 minutes, turning once. Drain the chicken on paper towels and serve hot.