

## LATE SPRING CHICKEN-IN-A-POT



QUARANTINE KITCHEN NOTE: This is a master recipe and infinitely variable; it works with what you have on hand. Vegetables can be as basic as the aromatics for chicken broth or stock—onions, carrots, celery, parsley, and/or dill—or more varied, depending on what's available. You can use wine, as in the recipe, or just water; either way, the ingredients make their own rich broth as they cook. I make chicken-in-a-pot often just for my husband and me. We enjoy it over a few days, changing it up by serving it with noodles, rice, or potatoes, and re-purposing it into a casserole. We're a week away from Passover as I write this. To simplify a holiday menu, chicken-in-a-pot is soup course and main all in one. You could even make mini matzah balls to add at the end of cooking time. Or not.

## Late Spring Chicken-in-a-Pot

From *The Seasonal Jewish Kitchen*. Pg. 225

*Makes 6 servings*

This is a lighter version of the traditional deli favorite that also solves the age-old problem of how to cook white and dark meat together and have both done to perfection. Splaying the chicken legs allows them to braise in the cooking liquid while the delicate breast meat steams above, resulting in plump white meat infused with the aromatics in the pot. There are many vegetable options to try; the choice is up to you. Here, red carrots, purple potatoes, and green pea shoots beautifully capture late spring. If you include spinach, use one with meaty leaves, such as a sweet Savoy type like Bloomsdale. You can include potatoes in the vegetable mix, or serve the chicken over egg pasta, such as *pappardelle* or *garganelli*, to soak up the delicious juices. And don't forget the challah.

1 chicken, 3½ to 4 pounds (1.6 to 1.8 kg)  
Kosher or sea salt and freshly ground white pepper  
1 large onion, preferably a spring onion with tops still attached  
8 carrots, preferably red (about ¾ pound/340 g)  
¼ pound (115 g) morel mushrooms  
½ pound (225 g) sugar snap peas, stringed, or  
1½ cups (220 g) shelled English peas or fava beans  
About 2 cups (55 g) pea shoots or Savoy spinach, such as Bloomsdale (about 2 ounces)  
1 pound (450 g) waxy or all-purpose potatoes, such as Russian Banana, La Ratte, French, or Rose Finn Apple Fingerlings or Yukon Gold  
1 tablespoon olive, grapeseed, or avocado oil  
1 cup (240 ml) dry white wine  
1 to 2 cups (240 to 480 ml) water  
2 tablespoons snipped fresh dill, chervil, or parsley

Pat the chicken dry. Use a sharp knife to make an incision in the skin at the point at which each leg joins the body of the bird, then bend the legs outward until they lie open. Season the chicken inside and out with salt and pepper.

Chop the onion into 1-inch (2.5-cm) pieces. If using a spring onion, include some of the tender neck. Scrub or peel the carrots, then halve them lengthwise, leaving a little of the stem attached because it's pretty and tastes delicious. Halve or quarter the mushrooms lengthwise, and brush well to loosen any grit. Check the snap peas for strings and strip away any you find. Remove and discard the tough stems from the pea shoots or spinach; if using pea shoots, discard any long, tough tendrils. Scrub or peel potatoes.

Cut small fingerlings in half lengthwise, or cut larger potatoes into 1- to 2-inch (2.5- to 5-cm) cubes.

In a large, wide pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the chicken, breast side up. Brown the underside of the chicken, pressing down on the legs so that they come in full contact with the hot pot. Cook until the chicken is fragrant and is light golden when you lift a drumstick to check, about 10 minutes.

Arrange the onion, carrots, and mushrooms around the chicken, adding them in that order so that the mushrooms are on top. Lower the heat to medium, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is softened and translucent, the carrots have deepened in color, and the mushrooms have released any moisture, about 7 minutes.

Add the wine, raise the heat to medium-high, and cook until the wine has reduced by about one third and the juices are starting to thicken, 3 to 5 minutes. Add water until the liquid in the pot is at a depth of 1 inch (2.5 cm), then add the potatoes. Cover the pot, turn down the heat to low, and cook at a very gentle simmer, basting the chicken occasionally with the pot juices, until the chicken is very tender, 30 to 45 minutes. As the chicken cooks, the pan

juices will increase. Add water as needed to keep the juices at a depth of at least 2 inches (5 cm). The legs should be mostly submerged, but the breast should be exposed. (The dish can be made ahead up to this point, cooled, covered, and refrigerated and then reheated later in the day.)

Five minutes before serving, add the pea shoots and peas to the pot. Turn up the heat to medium-low and cook until the peas and greens are tender but still bright. Taste and adjust the seasoning, then add the herb of your choice to the pot.

Cut or pull the chicken into serving-size portions and serve in shallow bowls along with some of the broth and vegetables (the chicken skin is not crisped in this dish; you may remove it first, if you prefer).

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