

ENGLISH MUFFIN CHICKEN POT “PIES”

makes 4

Done in about a half hour, this filling and comforting dish will sooth even the most tired, cold soul tonight. My version uses already cooked or rotisserie chicken and skips the pastry. Instead, it uses store-bought English muffins for the bottom and top of the “pie.” Make it as written, or ramp it up with the changes in vegetables noted in parentheses. A small, peeled and diced potato could also be used in place of two of the carrots. Alternately, you might use some leftover vegetables you’ve already cooked.

- 2 tablespoons butter or olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped (or 2 leeks, sliced and chopped - white and light green parts)
- 3 carrots, peeled and chopped (or 1 carrot, 1 parsnip, and 1/2 small turnip, small dice)
- 2 stalks celery, minced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon each kosher salt and 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground white (or black) pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/4 cup white wine, optional
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose, unbleached flour
- 1 1/2 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2 cups cooked, diced chicken
- 1/3 cup each frozen peas or corn
- 4 whole toasted English muffins, split and cut into 1/2-inch pieces to create croutons#
- GARNISHES: Chopped parsley, chives, or green onions (any or all) and or a drizzle of Sherry (Nothing on hand for garnish? A few canned crispy fried onions will suffice in a pinch for a topping.)

Preheat oven to 250 degrees and place 4 oven proof bowls on middle rack to warm.

In a large, deep skillet, heat the butter/oil over medium heat and sauté the onion, carrots, celery, and garlic seasoned with the

salt, pepper, thyme, and bay leaf. Cook, stirring, until vegetables are tender. (Cover to cook more quickly.)

Pour in wine, if using, and let cook down for a minute or so. Sprinkle with flour and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or so. Slowly pour in broth and milk. Let cook, stirring still, until just beginning to thicken. Add chicken, peas and corn. Cook until the peas and corn are hot and tender and the filling is thickened. If too thick, add some broth; if too thin, whisk a teaspoon of flour into a 1/4 cup broth, add to pan, and cook until thickened. Taste; adjust seasonings. Remove and discard bay leaf.

Divide the English muffin pieces into four piles. Place 1/2 of each pile into the bottom of each of four warm bowls. Ladle 1/4 of the pot pie filling (about 1 1/4 cups) onto the muffin pieces and top with the remaining muffin pieces (croutons). Garnish, as desired, with minced parsley, chives, green onions, or a drizzle of Sherry. Serve immediately.**

#OPTION: Cut into pieces only **half** of the English muffins. Then use an **entire half** of an English muffin at the bottom of each bowl, add filling, and top with cut pieces. This will then make a folk and knife meal.

**OPTION: If you'd like, you can add a bit of grated Cheddar or Parmesan cheese on top and bake the pies at 350 degrees Fahrenheit oven 10 minutes or until cheese is melted. Add the parsley, etc. after baking.

WINE: A well-rounded white might be best. A Viognier or a Chardonnay. Even an Albariño

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