

2018 ICA CATIE AWARDS SUBMISSION

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## Best Main Course Plate Presentation

# Sous Vide Fried Chicken!

with pickled radish, kumquat, and ginger salad



## Best Main Course Plate Presentation

### Concept/Design/Objective

We were going for a classic, old-fashioned comfort food home-style dish... done up elegantly with gourmet touches and creative flair. Something so familiar to guests that they would assume this to be an ordinary dish, but then unexpectedly, have their minds blown.

A seafood course leading up to this dish, and a beef course following this service, rounded out the meal. But we aspired to make this poultry plate the true star of the evening.

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### The Presentation

The plate was designed to be reminiscent of an artist's palette, but not literally recognizable as such.

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### The Culinary Details

We wanted a poultry entree that could hold up to a lighter red wine. Within the larger context of the whole meal, we knew we wanted to serve the pinot noir at this point, and that this dish would come between the scallop and the beef. This fried chicken with spicy glaze and the pickled salad was the perfect fit:

Fried chicken - free range, bone in  
spicy glaze  
pickled salad  
fresh thyme

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### Production and Process

The chicken was cooked sous vide then battered and fried a la minute at the event.

The plate was swirled with the glaze, fried chicken was placed down and drizzled with more glaze.

Pickle salad was added, and finally the fresh herb.

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### Challenges/Obstacles

The challenge with chicken has always been how to separate the cooking of the chicken from the frying of the batter and skin. Our solution? Don't try to do it all in one go. Cook at lower temp (sous vide), THEN batter and fry at a high temp in oil.

How does one cook the chicken through, and make the coating crispy without over cooking it? A: Double cooking. A lower temp to cook through, and then a second cook to add the crisp. We did this via Sous vide cooking then frying; riffing off of Korean fried chicken, where they fry it at a lower temp, then batter and fry at a higher temp.

Specifically to catering, how does one do the above for a significant number at a remote location? Loading in large fryers, and timing properly the firing of the food so it doesn't go cold, soft or soggy after the frying process. Slam, dunk.

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### RECIPE

# Buttermilk Fried Chicken

### INGREDIENTS:

kosher salt brine with crushed rosemary, thyme, and sage  
chicken pieces (I prefer a bone-in Frenched drumette for style and for flavor – but this recipe will work with your choice of chicken cuts)  
6 cups flour  
1/3 cup garlic powder  
1/3 cup onion powder

4 teaspoons paprika  
4 teaspoons cayenne  
4 teaspoons sea salt  
1 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper  
1 quart buttermilk  
pork lard or beef tallow for frying  
(vegetables oils like canola, corn, or peanut can be substituted but are NOT recommended)  
whole fresh rosemary, thyme, and sage

### TO PREPARE:

Brine the chicken pieces in refrigeration for at least 60 but not more than 90 minutes. Discard the brine, rinse the chicken under fresh water, pat dry as much as possible, and allow to air dry completely.

Set water bath to 155 F. While water is heating, vacuum pack and seal the chicken in preparation for first cook (sous-vide). Be careful to not allow the bones to break the bag.

Cook chicken in the water bath for 2 hours. While chicken is cooking, mix all dry ingredients, split into two bowls. Pour the buttermilk in a third bowl. Also, preheat fryer to 400 F. When chicken is ready, remove from water bath, remove from bags, pat dry.

Dip chicken pieces in first bowl of dry coating, dip in bowl of buttermilk, then dip in second bowl of dry coating. Transfer to parchment lined sheet pan / tray. Fry chicken pieces in batches for 2-4 minutes until crust has reached desired color.

Allow to rest in a warm (150 F), dry oven for a few minutes. While in the oven, flash fry whole fresh herbs. Use to garnish along with homemade pickles (recipe attached). Plate as desired.

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### RECIPE

# Homemade Pickles

### INGREDIENTS:

Fruit and vegetables of choice\*

2 cups champagne vinegar

1 cup water

2 cups brown sugar

1 teaspoon salt

whole star anise, loose leaf chai tea, whole  
coffee beans to taste

### TO PREPARE:

Combine vinegar, water, sugar, and salt in a saucepan. Bring to boil. Remove from heat and add the anise, tea, and coffee beans. Allow to steep for 5-10 minutes. Pour the liquid mixture over your vegetables, making sure they fully covered / submerged. Cover.

Refrigerate for 24 – 72 hours depending on desired taste and texture. In general, we prefer a fresher pickle and opt to serve these immediately after 24 hours in the brine. Depending on the vegetables in question, pickles should last for 2-4 weeks.

\*For example, we pickled radishes, kumquats, ginger, cucumbers, cauliflower, and onions to create the colorful pickled salad (which paired perfectly with the fried chicken).

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