SOUTHERN FRIED CHICKEN

Best recipe I've come across!

INGREDIENTS:

Buttermilk pulls double duty in this recipe, providing flavor and tenderizing the chicken. Although the recipe traditionally calls for lard, shortening is a fine substitute. Serves 4 to 6.

INGREDIENTS
3 1/2- to 4-lb. chicken, cut into 8 pieces
2 cups buttermilk
1 tsp. black pepper, divided
1/4 tsp. salt
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 tsp. seasoned salt, such as Lawry's
1 lb. lard (or solid vegetable shortening)
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter

Step 1
Rinse the chicken pieces and blot them with paper towels. In a large bowl combine the buttermilk, ¼ teaspoon of black pepper and the salt, and stir to combine.
Step 2
Add the chicken pieces and turn to coat evenly. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight, turning the pieces occasionally.
Step 3
Combine the flour, seasoned salt and the remaining 3/4 teaspoon of black pepper in a shallow baking dish and blend well. Line a baking sheet with three layers of paper towels and place it near the stove.
Step 4
Put the lard and butter in a large cast-iron frying pan or pot big enough to hold the chicken pieces in one layer without touching. Melt over medium-high heat. The fat should be about 1/2-inch deep.
Step 5
Heat until it registers 365 degrees on a candy thermometer or until a small cube of bread dropped in the oil browns in about 1 minute.
Step 6
Using tongs, remove the thighs from the marinade, draining well. Dredge them in the flour mixture, turning to coat evenly. Shake off any excess flour. Place them skin-side down in the center of the pan.
Step 7
Coat the remaining pieces in the same way and add them to the pan in a single layer without touching. Work in batches if necessary.
Step 8
Don't move the chicken for about 5 minutes or until the coating is set and looks firm. Check the underside by lifting with the tongs—it should be deep golden. Cook the pieces between 8 and 20 minutes (depending on size), turning them periodically until crispy brown and cooked through.

Step 9
To test, cut into the thickest part of a piece. The juices should run clear and the meat should be opaque throughout. Place on the paper-lined baking sheet to drain.

Step 10
Arrange the chicken pieces on a platter and serve hot, room temperature or cold.