

## **KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN WITH 11 HERBS AND SPICES (Unofficial recipe, not endorsed by the original company)**

*Prep: 30 minutes*

*Soak: 20-30 minutes*

*Cook: 15-18 minutes*

*Makes: 4 servings*

### *Ingredients*

2 cups all-purpose flour

2/3 tablespoon salt

1/2 tablespoon dried thyme leaves

1/2 tablespoon dried basil leaves

1/3 tablespoon dried oregano leaves

1 tablespoon celery salt

1 tablespoon ground black pepper

1 tablespoon dried mustard

4 tablespoons paprika

2 tablespoons garlic salt

1 tablespoon ground ginger

3 tablespoons ground white pepper

1 cup buttermilk

1 egg, beaten

1 chicken, cut up, the breast pieces cut in half for more even frying

Expeller-pressed canola oil

### *Method*

- 1.** Mix the flour in a bowl with all the herbs and spices; set aside.
- 2.** Mix the buttermilk and egg together in a separate bowl until combined. Soak the chicken in the buttermilk mixture at room temperature, 20-30 minutes.
- 3.** Remove chicken from the buttermilk, allowing excess to drip off. Dip the chicken pieces in the herb-spice-flour mixture to coat all sides, shaking off excess. Allow to sit on a rack over a baking sheet, 20 minutes.
- 4.** Meanwhile, heat about 3 inches of the oil in a large Dutch oven (or similar heavy pot with high sides) over medium-high heat to 350 degrees. (Use a deep-frying thermometer to check the temperature.) When temperature is reached, lower the heat to medium to maintain it at 350. Fry three or four pieces at a time, being careful not to crowd the pot. Fry until medium golden brown, turning once, 15-18 minutes. Transfer chicken pieces to a

baking sheet covered with paper towels. Allow the oil to return to temperature before adding more chicken. Repeat with remaining chicken.

NOTE: The original recipe also used the Accent seasoning powder, known as MSG (Monosodium Glutamate), to enhance the flavour to what we know today as KFC. But it is up to you to decide if this extra ingredient should be added.

This recipe came out in the open and published by the *Chicago Tribune* on August 19, 2016. According to the article, a Tribune reporter visited the family relatives of Harland Sanders (also known as Colonel Sanders). He was shown, presumably by the grand nephew, a scrapbook of the family and then pulled out a piece of paper with a handwritten fried chicken recipe mentioning the 11 herbs and spices. As the article revealed:

“The recipe came to us by way of Colonel Harland Sanders’ nephew, Joe Ledington, of Kentucky. He says he found it in a scrapbook belonging to his late Aunt Claudia, Sanders’ second wife. Ledington, 67, says he used to blend the spices that went into his uncle’s world-famous fried chicken, and the recipe in question is the real deal.”

The nephew thought nothing of what he had done mainly because he knew Sanders had no problem posting the recipe in the dining room of his original restaurant.

Of course, the company that currently holds the original recipe, *Yum! Brands*, is not conceding on whether this is the recipe used by the Colonel. But as testing has shown, the flavour is remarkably similar, if not better this version than the original sold by the company. This may end up being like those people having trouble tasting the difference between Coca Cola and Pepsi. Whatever the true original ingredients used in the current commercial version of KFCs, they will always remain a trade secret.

Source: <https://www.seattletimes.com/life/food-drink/kfc-recipe-challenge-puts-secret-11-herbs-and-spices-to-the-test/>

## Chicken Like the Colonel's

Prior to the release of the above recipe in 2016, attempts were made to uncover the recipe by trial-and-error and with experts tastebuds determining the likely ingredients. In the 1990s, this alternative recipe appeared on the internet.

At the time this recipe appeared, it was noted that there are 11 spices, but an additional 3 ingredients were necessary to derive that special flavour. What is shown below was considered the best version known at the time that very closely resembled the original recipe's famous flavour.

### *Ingredients*

- 1 Tbsp rosemary
- 1 Tbsp oregano leaves
- 1 Tbsp ground sage
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp marjoram
- 1 1/2 tsp thyme
- 3 Tbsp brown sugar
- 3 Tbsp dry minced parsley
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 Tbsp paprika
- 2 Tbsp garlic salt (or use 1/2 teaspoon unsalted garlic powder)
- 2 Tbsp onion salt (or use 2 teaspoons onion powder)
- 2 Tbsp powder chicken bouillon\*
- 1 pkg lipton tomato cup-a-soup mix

### *Method*

Place all ingredients in blender with on\off speed for 3-4 min. to pulverize, or rub through a fine strainer. Store in an airtight container. Makes about 3/4 cup. To use with flour: Add 1 oz mix to 1 cup of flour (or more closer to the original recipe to use 3/4 cup of flour and 1/4 cup of unseasoned breadcrumbs and 2 beaten eggs to dip the chicken and them into the flour) for coating chicken pieces (1 whole chicken cut to pieces should suffice). Fry in oil for 15 to 20 minutes, drain on racks for 5 minutes, and keep warm in an oven until ready to serve.

\* Or 4 chicken cubes mashed. Together with the cup-a-soup mix, this provided the flavour enhancer.

NOTE: At the time this recipe was released, it did not call for buttermilk and egg. Even so, it wasn't clear how the flavour infused into the chicken. The flavour in this alternative recipe was restricted to the flour and breadcrumb mix. Today it is likely the use of the buttermilk when cooked helped to absorb the flavours and was able to seep into the meat.

At the time this alternative recipe was released, various people had tried to duplicate the Colonel's original KFC recipe by doing things like:

1. Removing the thyme and use 1 teaspoon chili powder, 1 teaspoon dried sweet basil, an extra tablespoon of paprika and 2 tablespoons of Accent (an MSG-based seasoning).
2. Adding 1 teaspoon of celery powder (or celery salt) but tend to remove the thyme, oregano, marjoram and parsley (generally all the green herbs). But experience of viewing some specks of herbs in the original recipe does call for some kind of green herb(s) to be added.
3. In another recipe, oregano and basil is kept only but 1 teaspoon of ground mustard is added.
4. In another recipe, thyme and oregano is kept but 1 teaspoon of tarragon is added.

What many have agreed are the core ingredients considered critical in duplicating the original flavour is paprika, pepper, the right combination of green herbs (try marjoram, thyme, oregano, parsley and possibly tarragon), ground ginger, garlic and onion powder, and some celery powder. These are known today as the essential core 11 ingredients.