



Ham and Chicken Croquettes

MAKES 40

In nearly every culture it's common to use leftovers to incorporate into the next day's meal or snack. For this popular Spanish tapa, leftover chicken and ham are blended into a thick white sauce. Once the mixture is chilled, it's formed into little logs that are breaded and fried. When you bite into these little gems you get a crunchy coating with a soft pillowy center. This recipe makes quite a lot, so I freeze them and pull them out to be fried up anytime I need a perfect snack with a cold glass of rosé.

INGREDIENTS

2 chicken breasts, boneless, skinless	½ teaspoon black pepper
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon kosher salt	½ cup flour
½ cup chopped ham	1 ¼ cup milk
2 tablespoons butter	1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
2 tablespoons olive oil	2 eggs, beaten
1 onion, chopped	3 cups panko breadcrumbs
½ teaspoon dried thyme	4 cups canola oil

PROCESS:

Place chicken breasts in a saucepan and cover with water. Add 1 tablespoon salt and bring to a simmer over medium high heat. Cook chicken until it is longer pink, about 20 minutes. Drain water and let cool for 10 minutes. In the bowl of a food processor, add the chicken and ham. Process until coarsely chopped. Set aside. In a 2-quart saucepan heat the butter and olive oil over medium high heat. Add the onion and cook for 5 minutes. Add the thyme, 1 teaspoon salt, pepper, and flour. Stir until flour is completely coated in the onion mixture. Add milk and stir until thickened. It will be very thick, but you must keep stirring for 5 minutes.

Remove from heat and stir in chicken and ham mixture. Pour onto a baking sheet and spread out to cool. Place in refrigerator for 1 hour. Meanwhile, put beaten eggs into a bowl and breadcrumbs in another bowl. Remove chicken and ham mixture from refrigerator, and with your hands, form dough into 2-inch logs. You can flour your hands to help with stickiness. Dip each croquette into the eggs, shaking off excess, then coat in the breadcrumbs.

Place breaded croquettes on a baking sheet, ready to be fried. In a 2-quart saucepan, heat the oil to 375



degrees, using a candy thermometer. Drop 3 or 4 croquettes into the oil and fry until golden, about 2 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and set on a plate lined with paper towels. Repeat with remaining croquettes. Serve warm.

Note: *If you want to freeze some of the croquettes, place breaded croquettes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, careful not to let them touch. Place the baking sheet into the freezer and let freeze for 2 hours. Remove and put frozen croquettes into an airtight container and return to the freezer. When ready to fry, thaw croquettes for 1 hour and then fry until golden. They will take a little longer to fry since they are cold.*