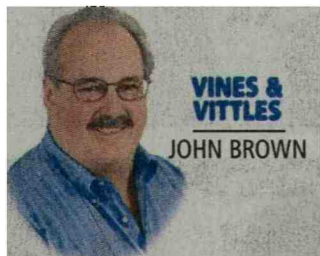


Grandpa would've liked B.S. Chicken



SUMMER is on the way, and, while I don't need a warm-weather excuse to roast animal parts on the grill, I am fired up to fire up the old Weber Performer in clement (as opposed to inclement) weather.

Shucks, I'm like a dedicated athlete. You know the type. Nothing gets in the way of our mission to be the best, regardless of whether (or weather) the contest is imminent.

While you were warming your tootsies by the fireplace last winter, I was out back trying to start a charcoal fire in a blizzard. Hey, frostbite is a small price to pay for the culinary treats I created.

Today I'm going to regale you with a recipe for one of those cold-weather creations and suggest two really nice wines that match this food just about perfectly.

When I was a tyke, before R&B ("Rocky and Bullwinkle"), my Italian grandfather would lead me and a few cousins to his chicken coop, where he would select a fat hen or two for the guillotine. Then he would revel in our pasty-faced reactions as the little critters pranced around headless for a few seconds.

After dispatching the birds to chicken heaven, he would present them to my grandmother and assorted aunts for de-feathering and cooking.

The usual method was frying or roasting in the oven. I'm sure if Grandpa had a charcoal grill, he would have approved of my iteration of Grandma's roasted, stuffed chicken.

I call this B.S. Chicken. No, I'm not disparaging my own recipe; the B.S. simply refers to "Barbecue Stuffed." Here goes.

B.S. Chicken

- 1 3- to 4-pound chicken (fryer)
- 4 tablespoons garlic, chopped finely
- 1 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon ground mustard
- 3 ounces olive oil
- 1 teaspoon ground fennel
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1 cup wild rice (can use brown rice or quinoa)
- 1 Italian sausage patty
- 4 ounces of mozzarella cheese, shredded

MAKE a wet rub by mixing 3 tablespoons of garlic, the black pepper, salt, oregano, mustard, paprika, cayenne and an ounce of the oil.

DISCARD the unmentionable

parts from inside the chicken cavity.

RUB the chicken all over — inside and out — with the wet rub, placing some under the breast and leg quarter skin.

SAUTÉ the onions with the red pepper and garlic, and add the Italian sausage and cheese.

COOK the wild rice until fluffy, and add salt and pepper to taste.

MIX the onions, peppers, sausage, cheese and rice together.

ALLOW mixture to come to room temperature.

STUFF the chicken with the mixture.

MAKE a charcoal fire and spread coals to either side of grill for indirect cooking. If using a gas grill, heat one side of the grill so chicken can be cooked indirectly.

PLACE the chicken on the grill but not over the coals.

COVER the grill and cook 1 1/2 hours (or to 175°).

ALLOW the chicken to rest for 25 minutes and serve.

Purists might insist on a full-bodied white to accompany this dish, but I recommend a medium to full red — no B.S. Here are a couple that should make this chicken cluck:

2010 L for Lyeth Merlot (\$16): Merlot has been catching a bad rap lately from the snobs, but this little lovely from Sonoma has just the right combination of ripe, black fruit and balancing acidity to marry nicely with the chicken.

2012 Mulderbosch Rosé (\$15): This cabernet sauvignon rosé from South Africa is about as full-bodied as you'll find with the crispness and liveliness you expect from a rosé. The wine is full

