



### **Italian Marsala Chicken Cutlets with Mushrooms**

*Quick cooked thin cutlets are highlighted with sweet marsala*

- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts (1/2 pound)
- Salt; ground black pepper as desired
- 2 Tablespoons prepared basil pesto
- 2 slices natural smoked bacon
- 1-1/2 ounces sliced smoked ham, diced
- 1 to 2 Tablespoons olive oil as needed
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 8 ounces cremini mushrooms, clean, trim
- 3/4 cup chicken bone broth or stock
- 3/4 cup sweet marsala wine
- 1 teaspoon dried rubbed sage leaves
- 3 Tablespoons unsalted butter

**Season the Chicken Breasts:** Slice chicken breasts in half lengthwise, (If partially frozen, this is easier to do) Place pieces one at a time in a plastic bag; pound chicken with meat mallet until about 1/4 inch thick. Remove from bag. Sprinkle both sides lightly with salt and black pepper. Spread pesto over both sides of chicken slices. Set aside.

**Cook Bacon and Ham:** In a skillet, cook bacon until crisp; remove to paper towel lined plate; cool; crumble or cut into small pieces. Sauté ham in bacon drippings for 1 minute; remove to paper towel lined plate. Set aside.

**Cook Chicken:** Sauté 2 pieces of chicken in bacon drippings over medium high heat until browned about 3 to 4 minutes on one side; turn over; cook for 2 or 3 more minutes until lightly browned. Do not overcook. Set aside covered with tented foil to stay warm. Cook remaining chicken cutlets following the same procedure.

**Cook Onions and Mushrooms:** Add oil to drippings if needed. Cook onions and mushrooms in the skillet over high heat about 3 minutes or until beginning to brown. Add 1/2 cup broth, cook scraped up browned bits. Remove tender cooked mushrooms from liquid; set aside to stay warm.

**Prepare Sauce:** Add remaining 1/4 cup broth, marsala wine, and sage to pan drippings. Bring to a boil, reducing liquid in half.

Remove from heat; whisk in butter until melts; stir in cooked bacon and ham pieces and mushrooms. Season to taste with salt and black pepper. Return chicken pieces to skillet, coat with pan sauce.

**To Serve:** Place chicken on serving platter with mushroom onion sauce. If desired, serve with cooked egg noodles or pappardelle tossed with fresh spinach. Serves: 2

**Cook's Note:** I even prepared this ahead of time and just reheated it. It was still over-the-top wonderful.

**About the Recipe:** How about a restaurant styled, easy-to-make special weekend dinner! The marsala wine gives the pesto flavored chicken a full-bodied sweet-but-balanced flavor as it is basted with the sauce. Chunky mushrooms add that umami flavor with their meaty texture and enhanced with light citrus flavors and floral aromas. We love to accompany this delicious dinner with cooked pappardelle, twirled with wilted fresh spinach.