

Chinese Tea-Smoked Chicken

<http://userealbutter.com/2007/10/18/chinese-tea-smoked-chicken-recipe/>

8 whole chicken legs (preferably organic)
1 tbsp Sichuan peppercorns (which are NOT black peppercorns)
4 tbsps salt
2 Lipton tea bags, tea removed from the bags
1 tsp flour
1 tbsp brown sugar

equipment

4 clean short cans, with bottoms, tops, and labels removed
1 grill or cooling rack
aluminum foil

If you want to remove the bony end (opposite the foot end) of the whole leg, use a Chinese cleaver to lop it off (carefully). Reserve the bony end. Mix the peppercorns and the salt in a small bowl and then rub the mixture over the chicken legs. Place the chicken legs in a covered dish in the refrigerator overnight. Remove the chicken from the refrigerator and wash the salt off. Place chicken in a large pot and cover with cold water (you can add those bony parts here to make a nice broth). Bring to boil over high heat. Cover the pot and turn off the heat. At ten minutes, poke the chicken with a chopstick or fork. If the juices are red or pink, cover the pot and let it stand another 5 minutes or turn the heat on again to bring to boil and shut off the heat. Basically, we want to get the juices running clear. Remove chicken from pot and let cool completely on a plate.

Set up a sheet of foil (two pieces if necessary) large enough to wrap around a stack of the cans, rack, and chicken (see photograph above). Sprinkle the tea, flour, and brown sugar evenly over the foil in an area roughly the size of the rack. Set the can rings down in a stable configuration and place the rack on top of the cans. Place the cooled chicken legs, skin-side up in a single layer on the rack. Wrap the whole thing up like a tent and seal the top and sides by folding over twice. Carefully move this contraption to your grill. Once it is settled on the grill, turn it on high for 15 minutes. Check the state of the chicken by opening the foil and looking to see how brown it is. If it is quite brown by 15 minutes, reduce the heat to low-medium for another 15 minutes. If it isn't terribly brown looking, check again in 5 minutes on high until it reaches a nice deep reddish brown color and then reduce heat to low-medium for 15 minutes. Turn off the grill and open the foil (I'd open it outside because it's an awfully smoky ordeal and will smoke up your house if you do it indoors). Move the chicken to a platter or chop it up before serving.