

THROW-BACK CHICKEN FRIED STEAK

Despite the stereotype, most of the southern cooks in my circle have quit eating a lot of fried foods, with a few notable exceptions. Old-fashioned chicken fried steak is one of those time-honored southern dishes we feel is worthy of exception, so don't be looking for us to let go of it anytime soon. Oh, and do serve this with mashed potatoes or it's almost a crime.

STEAK:

- 1 cup flour
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 pounds round steak cut into serving sizes and beaten thin with kitchen mallet
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ cup butter

GRAVY:

- 3 tablespoons flour
- 3 tablespoons fat (pan drippings after frying steak)
- 2 cups cold water
- Salt and pepper to taste

Season flour with salt and pepper; flour steaks well. Dip in beaten egg and dredge in flour again. Heat butter, add steaks, and cook over medium heat 3 to 4 minutes per side. Don't overcook! Move steaks to warm oven and prepare gravy.

Add 3 tablespoons flour to pan drippings. (If you don't have quite enough drippings, add a little more butter.) Stir flour until brown, and pour in water. Continue to stir while bringing to a boil. Reduce heat and cook 5 to 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve with steaks.