

Southern Style Gribenes

By Alex Idov @ BourbonandSchmaltz.com

Derived from the German word meaning 'piece of fat', Griben (plural: gribenes), or chicken crackling, are a treasured Eastern European Jewish delicacy. Often referred to as the kosher pork rind, *l'havdil**, gribenes are traditionally cooked in schmaltz along with slivered onion. This recipe takes a more Southern cooking approach to the Old-World classic, deep-frying the chicken skins in oil, in place of pan frying the skins in its own fat. I will provide the traditional method of preparing gribenes and schmaltz, as well, for you traditionalists out there. Enjoy, y'all.

Meat Serving Size Varies

- Chicken Skins, cut into strips or large squares/rectangles
- 1-2 large Yellow Onion, sliced and quartered
- Light Olive, Grapeseed, or Peanut Oil
- Salt and Pepper, to taste

Contemporary Deep-Fried Method: The amount of oil and onion needed depends on how much chicken skins being prepared. Heat up sufficient amount of oil to cover the chicken skins. Heat oil to 365° F in a soup pot, over a medium-high flame. If you don't have a frying thermometer, test the oil by dropping in a small piece of onion. When the oil is at proper frying temperature, the onion will sizzle immediately. Carefully add the remaining onions and chicken skins and cook for 10-15 minutes, or until skins are thoroughly cooked through and a medium golden-brown color. Remove the gribenes from the oil using a slotted spoon and transfer to a paper-towel lined plate. Season with salt and pepper and allow to cool. Store in an air-tight container and enjoy with sandwiches, smashed potatoes, soups, or on their own.

Traditional Method: -Yields schmaltz in addition to gribenes-When preparing gribenes according to the traditional method, reserve chicken fat along with skin. Wash fat and skin and pat dry. Place in a cast-iron or heavy skillet. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Cook, uncovered, over low heat. When the fat begins to melt and brown, add onions and continue to cook until chicken skins and onions are golden brown and crunchy. Remove from heat and allow to cool slightly. Strain gribenes from schmaltz and place each in a separate air-tight container. Refrigerate and enjoy, y'all.

**l'havdil*: Not to compare, or be mentioned together. To separate.