

# Chicken Cacciatore

Serves 6    **Cooking Time** 4 to 6 hours on Low

**WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Chicken cacciatore is a classic Italian peasant dish of braised chicken thighs in a hearty and robust sauce of tomatoes and red wine highlighted by the flavor of earthy, woody mushrooms. With these robust flavors we were able to avoid browning. Instead we opted to use the microwave for our aromatics (a combination of onions, tomato paste, garlic, oregano, red pepper flakes, and porcini mushrooms), and we added the chicken thighs right into the slow cooker. The porcini proved to be crucial, providing complexity and depth of flavor that white mushrooms or cremini mushrooms alone would not provide.

- 2 onions, minced**
- ¼ cup tomato paste**
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- 6 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh oregano or 2 teaspoons dried**
- ¼ ounce dried porcini mushrooms, rinsed and minced**
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes**
- 1 pound cremini mushrooms, trimmed and halved if small or quartered if large**
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained**
- ½ cup low-sodium chicken broth**
- ½ cup dry red wine**
- 2 tablespoons Minute tapioca**
- 12 (6-ounce) bone-in chicken thighs, skin removed, trimmed**
- Salt and pepper**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil**

**1.** Microwave onions, tomato paste, oil, garlic, oregano, porcini, and red pepper flakes in bowl, stirring occasionally, until onions are softened, about 5 minutes; transfer to slow cooker.

**2.** Stir cremini, tomatoes, broth, wine, and tapioca into slow cooker. Season chicken with salt and pepper and nestle into slow cooker. Cover and cook until chicken is tender, 4 to 6 hours on low.

**3.** Transfer chicken to serving platter and tent loosely with aluminum foil. Let braising liquid settle for 5 minutes, then remove fat from surface using large spoon. Stir in basil and season with salt and pepper to taste. Spoon 1 cup sauce over chicken and serve with remaining sauce.

## SMART SHOPPING DRIED PORCINI MUSHROOMS

Like fresh fruits and vegetables, the quality of dried porcini mushrooms can vary dramatically from package to package and brand to brand. Always inspect the mushrooms before you buy. Avoid those with small holes, which indicate that the mushroom was perhaps home to pinworms. Instead, look for large, smooth porcini, free of worm holes, dust, and grit.

