vol-au-vent
w/ chicken suprême sauce & spring vegetables
Vol-Au-Vent with Chicken Suprême Sauce & Spring Vegetables.

Makes 12.

2.6 lb. (1200g) puff pastry*

Chicken Stock
4 ea. chicken thighs with drumsticks
1 qt (1L) water
2 cups (500ml) white wine (Chardonnay).

Bouquet
1 carrot, washed
1 leek, white part only, halved lengthwise and washed
2 celery stalks, washed and trimmed
1 onion + 1 bay leaf + 3 cloves
3 springs fresh thyme
1 garlic bulb, halved
Mushroom stems.*

Chicken Suprême Sauce
3 Tbsp (45g) unsalted butter
2 ounces (60g) shallots, minced
5 ounces (150g) carrot, washed and cubed
5 ounces (150g) celery, washed and cubed
7 ounces (210g) baby bella mushrooms or porcini, cleaned, stems removed (save for the stock*)
2 Tbsp (30g) all-purpose flour
2 cups (500ml) reduced chicken stock
1/2 cup (125ml) heavy cream
Shredded chicken meat
5 ounces (150g) English peas, blanched
1 Tbsp (18g) lemon confit, minced (optional)
Salt & ground black pepper to taste. Some fresh herbs such as chopped parsley, tarragon or dill can be added to the mixture if desired.

Egg Wash
2 egg yolks mixed with a few drops of water. Or, 1 whole egg and 2 yolks beaten with a pinch of salt.
Chicken Stock Method
In a large pot or cast iron Dutch oven, add chicken and the following ingredients and bring to a boil. Put the lid on and let simmer for 45 minutes. Remove chicken, let cool for about 10 minutes and shred. The meat should easily come off the bones. Be aware of small bones though! Throw the chicken bones into the stock and continue to reduce the chicken stock to 2 cups (500ml). Pass through a fine mesh sieve into a clean saucepan and keep warm. Discard solids.

Chicken Suprême Sauce
In a hot pot or Dutch oven, add butter and sauté shallots, carrot and celery for 5 minutes on medium heat. Add mushrooms and cook for 3 minutes more. Add flour and cook for a minute. Pour in the reduced chicken stock and the heavy cream, give a good stir and cook for 10 minutes on low heat; covered. Add the shredded chicken, the blanched English peas. Season with the lemon confit, salt and ground black pepper. Add some chopped fresh herbs and cheese if desired. Keep warm. The chicken suprême sauce can be refrigerated for up to 3 days.

*Puff Pastry for Vol-Au-Vent
For the inverted puff pastry recipe: look up for The Apple Turnovers recipe. One recipe will hold 12 vol-au-vent.
Dust work surface with flour and roll out puff pastry into a generous 1/4 inch (1cm) thick rectangle. (If using store bought puff pastry, superimpose 2 sheets of pastry to match the desired thickness and gently brush with water to seal. Readjust the thickness with the rolling pin. Refrigerate dough for 30 min to relax before cutting into circles. Then divide into nine ≈ 4 inch (10cm) rounds using a fluted cookie cutter. Save scraps for later use such as pies, mille-feuille etc.. Arrange disks onto a baking tray lined with a moistened silicone mat or parchment paper (it prevents pastry moving around). With a smaller plain ≈ 2.4 inch (6cm) diameter cookie cutter, make a round center cut almost all away through. Brush tops with egg wash and chill for 30 minutes. Brush with egg wash again and score (optional). Refrigerate an hour before baking or overnight.
To freeze vol-au-vent: place them in the freezer overnight or until it has completely hardened. Store in a sealed freezer bag and keep frozen for a few weeks or sous-vide for up to 10 months.

Baking
Preheat oven to 325ºF (160ºC). Place two ≈ 1.75 inch (4.5cm) height pastry rings or something similar and ovenproof that can hold an upside down draining grate. This allows vol-au-vent to rise evenly. Bake vol-au-vent for 45 minutes. Turn off oven and leave pastry shells to dry out for 15 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool. If using a convection oven, baking time may be shortened.

Final Assembly
Carefully, slice off top from each vol-au-vent following the round mark. Fill each vol-au-vent generously with the hot chicken suprême sauce, put tops back on if desired and serve immediately. Bon appétit!