Poulet sauté a la crème
(Chicken in cream sauce with mushrooms)

3 or 4 boneless chicken breasts
1 lb. fresh mushrooms (or more to taste), sliced thinly
1/2 cup dry sherry or amontillado
Butter (no, you cannot substitute margarine)
1/2 to 3/4 pint heavy cream
2 minced shallots
Coarse kosher salt
Pinch of nutmeg
Freshly-ground black pepper
2 T minced parsley plus 2 sprigs for garnish

In a large cast-iron skillet, melt 4 T butter over medium-high heat. Add the chicken breasts and brown them, turning a few times. Season with salt and fresh pepper to taste. When done, remove to a heated serving dish and cover.

Reduce heat to medium low and deglaze the pan with the sherry, scraping off any brown bits that cling to the side of the skillet. Reduce for a few minutes by about 1/3. Add the shallots and stir until they’re tender. Add the mushrooms and up to 2 more T butter, stirring frequently. When the mushrooms soften and start to release their liquid, add the cream.

Keep stirring constantly as the cream works into the sauce and reduces. Season to taste with salt and pepper. When the cream has reduced by about 1/2 to 2/3, add the nutmeg and pour over the chicken breasts. Sprinkle the minced parsley over the top of the chicken.

Serve with steamed herbed rice, steamed green vegetables (green beans are best, followed by broccoli or Brussels sprouts) and a dry white wine. If you have no rice, you can substitute mashed potatoes, boiled potatoes, crisp roasted potatoes, toast points or even pasta. By adding more butter, mushrooms and cream, the sauce can be stretched as far as may be necessary. Garnish plates with fresh parsley.

—David Sisk