- Prep Time: 15 minutes
- Cook Time: 10–12 minutes (per batch)
- Total Time: 30 minutes
- Yield: Serves 4 as a main course, 6–8 as an appetizer
- Intensity Level: Medium (Requires attention to oil temperature)
- Cuisine: Southern American

Table of Contents

- Ingredients
  - For the Livers
  - For the Breading
  - For Frying
- Equipment
- Step-by-Step Instructions
  - Phase 1: Preparation and Soaking (Time: 10 minutes | Intensity: Low)
  - Phase 2: The Dredge (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Low)
  - Phase 3: The Fry (Time: 10–12 minutes | Intensity: High)
  - Phase 4: Rest and Serve (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Low)
- Serving Suggestions
- Nutrition Information

Ingredients

For the Livers

- 1 lb (450g) fresh chicken livers: Look for livers that are firm, glossy, and deep red. Avoid any with green spots or a strong, off-putting odor.

- 1 cup buttermilk: This acts as a tenderizer and helps the coating adhere.
- 1 teaspoon hot sauce: (Optional, but recommended for a subtle kick).

For the Breading

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup yellow cornmeal: This adds an essential grit and crunch to the crust.
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper: Adjust to taste.
- 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika: For a hint of smokiness.

For Frying

- Vegetable oil or peanut oil: Enough to fill a cast-iron skillet or heavy-bottomed pan to a depth of about 1 inch (approx. 4 cups).

Equipment

- Cast-iron skillet or heavy-bottomed Dutch oven

- Wire cooling rack set over a baking sheet
- Instant-read thermometer (highly recommended)
- Tongs
- Paper towels

Step-by-Step Instructions

Phase 1: Preparation and Soaking (Time: 10 minutes | Intensity: Low)

1. Clean the Livers: Begin by rinsing the chicken livers under cold running water. Pat them dry with paper towels. Using a sharp knife or kitchen shears, carefully trim away any visible fat, connective tissue, or greenish spots. *Note: Livers can vary in size; if any are exceptionally large, you may cut them in half so they cook evenly.*

2. The Buttermilk Soak: In a medium bowl, combine the buttermilk and hot sauce (if using). Add the cleaned livers, ensuring they are fully submerged. Let them soak for at least 10 minutes while you prepare the breading. This step is crucial for mellowing the flavor and ensuring tenderness.

Phase 2: The Dredge (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Low)

1. Prepare the Breading Station: In a shallow dish or pie plate, whisk together the flour, cornmeal, salt, black pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, cayenne, and smoked paprika.

2. Heat the Oil: Pour the oil into your cast-iron skillet to a depth of about 1 inch. Heat over medium-high heat until the oil reaches 350°F (175°C) . If you do not have a thermometer, drop a pinch of flour into the oil; if it sizzles immediately and rises to the surface, the oil is ready. *Intensity Note: Keep a close eye on the heat. If the oil starts to smoke, reduce the heat immediately.*

Phase 3: The Fry (Time: 10–12 minutes | Intensity: High)

1. Dredge the Livers: Working in batches (do not overcrowd the pan), remove a few livers from the buttermilk, allowing the excess to drip off. Roll them in the flour mixture, pressing gently to ensure a thick, even coating. Shake off any excess flour.

2. The First Batch: Carefully place the coated livers into the hot oil. You should hear a vigorous sizzle. Fry for 4 to 6 minutes on the first side.

3. Flip and Finish: Using tongs, flip the livers and continue frying for another 3 to 5 minutes on the second side. The livers are done when they are deep golden brown and float slightly, and the internal temperature reaches 165°F (74°C) . *Intensity Note: This is the critical phase. If the oil is too hot, the outside will burn before the inside cooks; if it is too cool, the livers will become greasy.*

4. Drain: Transfer the fried livers to the wire rack (or a paper towel-lined plate) to drain. Sprinkle immediately with a pinch of kosher salt.

Phase 4: Rest and Serve (Time: 5 minutes | Intensity: Low)

1. Allow the livers to rest for 5 minutes before serving. This allows the juices to redistribute.

2. Serve hot with your choice of accompaniments.

Serving Suggestions

- The Classic: Serve with creamy mashed potatoes, white pepper gravy, and collard greens.

- The Dip: Pair with a remoulade sauce, ranch dressing, or a simple hot honey drizzle.

- The Sandwich: Pile them high on a toasted bun with lettuce, tomato, and mayo.

Nutrition Information

Disclaimer: Nutritional values are estimates and will vary based on exact portion sizes, the amount of breading used, and oil absorption. This calculation is based on 4 servings.

Amount Per Serving (Approx. 4 oz cooked portion):

- Calories: 380 kcal
- Total Fat: 20g (Saturated Fat: 4g)
- Cholesterol: 350mg
- Sodium: 620mg
- Total Carbohydrate: 26g (Dietary Fiber: 1g, Sugars: 2g)
- Protein: 22g