

**CORNISH HENS WITH KASHA PILAF**

SERVES 4

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1 medium onion, cut into 1/8-inch dice
- 1/2 pound white mushrooms, stemmed and quartered
- 1/2 cup whole kasha
- 2 1/2 cups homemade or low-sodium canned chicken stock
- Flour, seasoned with salt and pepper, for dredging
- 2 two-pound Cornish hens, split, with backbones reserved
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 1/2 pound orecchiette pasta, cooked al dente
- 1/3 cup loosely packed parsley leaves, finely chopped

1. Heat oven to 425°; place a roasting pan in it. Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add onions, cook 10 to 12 minutes; add mushrooms, cook until tender. Add kasha and 2 cups stock. Cook until kasha is tender, about 20 minutes. Set aside.
2. Melt 1 1/2 tablespoons butter in a cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Flour hens and cook, skin side down, with backbones, until golden brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Turn and cook 3 to 5 more minutes. Transfer hens to roasting pan; roast for about 20 minutes.
3. Pour grease from skillet. Over high heat, add wine and use a wooden spoon to scrape up brown bits. Lower heat, add remaining stock, and cook until reduced by a third, 5 minutes. Stir in remaining butter.
4. Stir cooked pasta and parsley into kasha. Season and heat through.
5. Serve hens over kasha pilaf and spoon sauce over hens.