

The Chicken Castle

Part 1: Speaking Chickanese



Revelations of a chicken whisperer

Includes Links to Videos of the REAL Chickens!!



QQ-TEAM:

JAN CLAUDIA RAUL BART ALI VICTOR WENDELA

The Chicken Team



JAN

Jan is a biologist and medical doctor. He lived with chickens his whole life and worked in a Zoo too. He speaks Chickanese and wrote the book!



CLAUDIA

Claudia is a teacher for children and a specialist of communication



RAUL

Raul is the Chicken whisperer, the protector of the Flock and the storyteller



ALI

Ali is a lawyer and a real kitchen-chef



BART

Bart is an engineer advising on new ecological projects

VICTOR AND WENDELA



Victor knows chickens



Created at Quinta Quixote
Algarve, PORTUGAL
2026

SEE THE REAL CHICKENS IN ACTION

The stories in this book are just the beginning! We have a special YouTube channel with over 250 videos of all the chickens you're about to meet. They are all REAL!

Throughout this book you will find links everywhere and they are your secret to unlocking live-action videos of The Chicken Castle!



Ready to Watch? It's Easy!

Now, check out some of our Fun Videos to get started!

Branca wants to become a Mommy

Jan tells about Jelly our meditation chicken

CHECK IT OUT
↓

Raul introduces one chicken: Molly

Spaghetti-time! How the chickens loves it!

Highly intelligent chickens with Victor

How The Book Started

This chicken book was created in 2026 by a team of chicken lovers. How did it start?

It all began at a Portuguese farm called Quinta Quixote, where Jan, the Dutch author of this book, had a flock of remarkable chickens, each with their own unique personality.

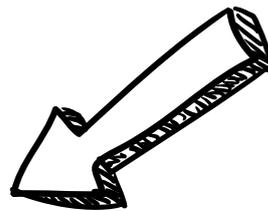
Then, a number of friends said, "We want to help you make a book!" Raul, a Portuguese friend of Jan and the chickens, is the chicken whisperer presenting all the stories and movies of the chickens to you.

This way, everyone could learn about these amazing creatures and even pick up some Chikanese, the chicken language, presented in the first book of a series on chickens!

We want to thank Margo Rihet for her beautiful drawings of the chickens and all the friends at the farm who helped with the first edition of this book for people who want to know more about chickens.



**I am Raul,
the Chicken Whisperer**



WHAT'S INSIDE?

Hello, my name is Raul, and I am very happy to welcome you to this book.

I am a good friend of the chickens, and I spend a lot of time with them.

I watch them, listen to them, sit quietly with them, and little by little I have learned something very important: chickens are not simple animals at all. They are not little egg machines. They are not chicken nuggets with feathers. They are living, feeling beings with their own character, their own voice, and their own way of being in the world.

That is why we made this book.

With this book, the first of a series, we want to show the world that chickens are sentient beings. They have emotions, preferences, fears, friendships, habits, and social intelligence. They recognize one another. They remember faces. They form bonds. They have their own structure in the flock, a little bit like humans do. Some are brave, some are shy, some are bossy, some are sweet, some are always curious, and some just want peace, safety, and a good cuddle.

And yes, they really do have a language. Chickanese!

If you spend enough time with chickens, you begin to hear that their sounds are not just sounds. Their voices mean something. They call, warn, invite, complain, comfort, protest, and greet. They speak to their chicks, to their friends, and sometimes to us too. In this book, I want to help you listen differently, so you can begin to understand this beautiful world of Chickanese.

In this series of books, I will introduce you to the chickens of the Chicken Castle, their stories, their personalities, their friendships, and their funny daily adventures. You will meet real chickens, not made-up cartoon animals, but individuals with their own lives.





And even better, in this book you will also find videos and little movies, so you can see them in action with your own eyes. That makes everything even more real, because once you watch them closely, you will never look at a chicken in the same way again.

I hope that after reading this book, you will see what I see when I sit with them, not “just chickens,” but persons of the flock, each with a story.

So....Welcome to the world of the chickens!
Welcome to the Chicken Castle.

Come with me, and I will show you their secret lives in the next chapters.

Raul

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Jelly



Mollie



Branca



Sissi



Punky



Rosa



Pastel de Nata



Chanel



Yokinza



Aladdin



Flora



Bubbles



Catharina



Janny

1. THE CASTLE RESIDENTS

Drawings by Margo

2. Fun Fact: From Dwarf to Giant

Did You Know... There are 350 different chickens of many shapes and sizes?

That's right! When you think of a chicken, you might imagine just one kind, but there are actually so many different types, it's like a chicken parade! Some chickens are super tiny, no bigger than a cuddly toy, and they're called Bantam chickens.

Others are giant, almost as tall as a small kid, like the Aseel, you see here in the arms of a girl.

They come with all sorts of feathers too, fluffy ones, sleek ones, and even some with fancy hair, dots or feathered feet!



Scientific Info:

There are over 350 breeds worldwide: from miniature Bantam breeds (like the Serama, which can weigh under 500g / 1 lb) to massive meat breeds (such as the Jersey Giant, weighing over 6 kg / 13 lbs) and highly prolific egg-laying breeds.

This vast array of sizes, colors, feather types, and temperaments is a testament to centuries of artificial selection from their common wild ancestor, the Red Jungle Fowl.

WOW!



3. WELCOME TO THE CHICKEN CASTLE

Forget everything you think you know about chickens! They aren't just birds that lay eggs and sometimes become chicken nuggets. Oh no, they are so much more!

In the Chicken Castle you'll discover a secret world. You'll meet chickens with amazing personalities. Some are brave explorers, some are super shy, and some are total cuddle-bugs who just want a hug!



They each have different personalities, make friends, and even speak their own language.



JUST LIKE YOU!



This book will show you how to understand them and become a **chicken-whisperer**! Get ready to learn their secret words, meet every chicken by name, and uncover the unique quirks and friendships that make the castle magical.

Every chicken you'll read about is **REAL**, and you can watch their funny adventures on our YouTube channel!

Hey, future chicken whisperer!
I will also share some cool
Chicken Science & Fun Facts
that will blow your mind!



THE CHICKEN CASTLE AT THE FARM CALLED



The Chicken Castle is part of an very old farm in the hills of the Algarve, a part of Portugal.

That farm is called Quinta Quixote. Quinta means farm in Portuguese and Quixote was a very funny knight many hundreds of years ago.

He always wanted to battle the bad and help the good!

Here you see the farm as well as the chicken castle.



The farm has been built from big natural stones; the walls are very thick. You can see the castle at the right side of the farm as a little tower. Can you find it? The chicken castle was first a ruin of a goat stable.

Then Jan, Raul with friends built the castle with all the loose big stones which were laying around. Let us now present one of our chickens called Pastel de Nata!

4. PASTEL DE NATA

Meet the Chickens



Castle Title: The Sweet & Curious Explorer
Member of: The Cuddle Brigade
Loves: Investigating everything and cuddling on a friendly lap
Dislikes: Little Punky and being chased away by Bubbles
Special Skill: Being a gentle and protective mother to her chicks

Bio: Pastel de Nata is named after the famous Portuguese pastry because her golden-orange feathers are just as sweet! She is one of the most tame and curious chickens at the castle, always happy to explore a shiny object or investigate a friendly visitor.



Here you see how curious Pastel de Nata is, she always wants to explore everything! She does not want to miss any action in The Chicken Castle!

Pastel de Nata likes to sit on the lap and being cuddled, she quickly closes the eyes and stretches the neck in order to receive more cuddles behind the ears, where she cannot scratch herself!

yum!

The Sweetest Laundry Day in History

Our hen, **Pastel de Nata**, is named after a world-famous pastry in Portugal! But the story of how that sweet treat was invented is pretty surprising. Get ready for a secret recipe that was born from...

A pile of dirty laundry!



*Pastel de Nata
with her baby chick*

Way back in the 1800's, in a monastery in Portugal, some clever monks had a very strange way to get their robes sparkling white. They used hundreds and hundreds of **egg whites**! Can you imagine cracking open all those eggs just to do the laundry?

But this left them with a huge, yummy problem: mountains of leftover egg yolks!

What would you do?



These monks were too smart (and probably too hungry) to let them go to waste. They marched those yolks to the kitchen, mixed them with sugar & milk, and baked the creamy filling inside a flaky pastry.

And just like that... BAM! The **Pastel de Nata** was born. It might be the sweetest & most delicious result of doing the laundry in history. *wow!*

5. WHY IS IT FUN TO BECOME A REAL CHICKEN-WHISPERER?



You can be a chicken whisperer! If you love to be with us, listen and look to us, learn from us and can understand our habits and being.

You will be trusted by us and understood! We quickly will become your cuddling brigade!

You speak Chikanese!

Step 1: Be Quiet Like a Feather

Wanna earn a chicken's trust? Sit real still. No sudden moves. Let them come to you. Never chase them!

Raul's Fun Fact #1: Chickens recognize faces, they'll remember if you're the nice human with snacks or the scary one who wears squeaky shoes!

Step 2: Bring Snacks, Not Screeches

Hold out some oats, corn, or mealworms. Stay calm. Chickens don't like drama. They LOVE food.

Raul's Fun Fact #2: A chicken can see more colors than you! Your snack hand is basically glowing.

Step 3: Speak Chikanese

Sit relaxed. Just talk soft to them. Pretend you're part of the flock. They'll totally vibe with you.

Raul's Fun Fact #3: Chickens have over 20 sounds for different moods. They even purr when they're happy!

6. Fun Facts

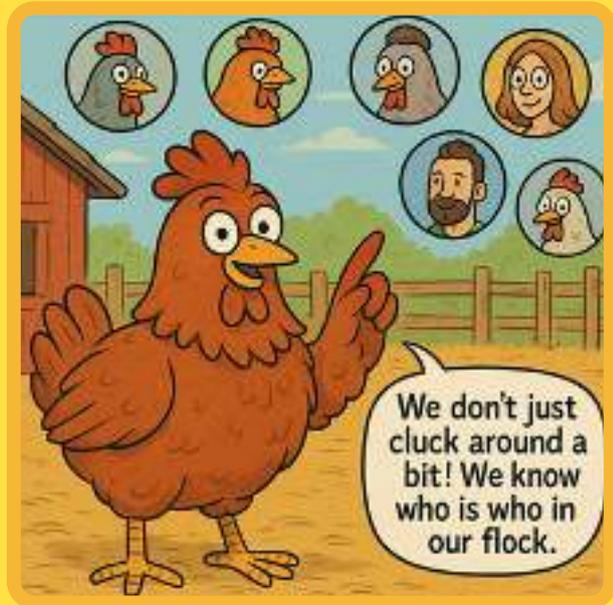
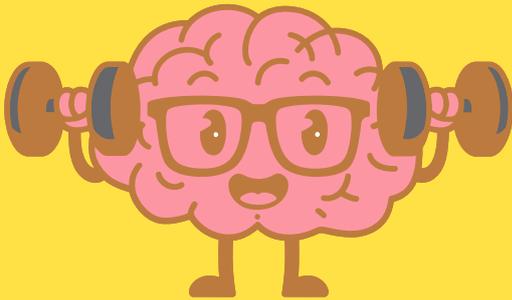
Nothing wrong with our memory of faces!

We can remember up to 100 different faces of other chickens and even you, humans!

We can recognize you and your human friends too!

We don't just cluck around a bit! We know who is who in our flock.

Although our brain is not so big! We are clever. In our own way.



Scientific Info:

This fact comes from research in animal behavior and cognition. Chickens have strong social memory and can recognize and remember up to 100 individuals. It's one of the reasons why they form social groups with rules, friendships, and even little quarrels, just like us!

WOW!

7. HOW DID THE CHICKEN CASTLE START?



Some years ago, in a beautiful old castle in Portugal, a Dutch artist named Hélène came to stay.

Hélène wasn't just any artist, she loved painting birds, capturing their beauty and personality **in her paintings**.



An oil on canvas painting of Punky the one-eyed Rooster made by the Dutch artist Hélène.

She painted so good that some said she could be the new female Rembrandt.

Rembrandt was a very famous painter from the 17th century, living in Holland.

But soon, she would fall in love with real, living birds in a way she never expected.

Hélène had been asked to take care of the castle while the owner had to be away. It was a magical place, with old stone walls, hidden corners, and big open spaces perfect for exploring. When the owner saw how much Hélène loved being there, he told her, "You can stay as long as you like."

So, she made the castle her home.

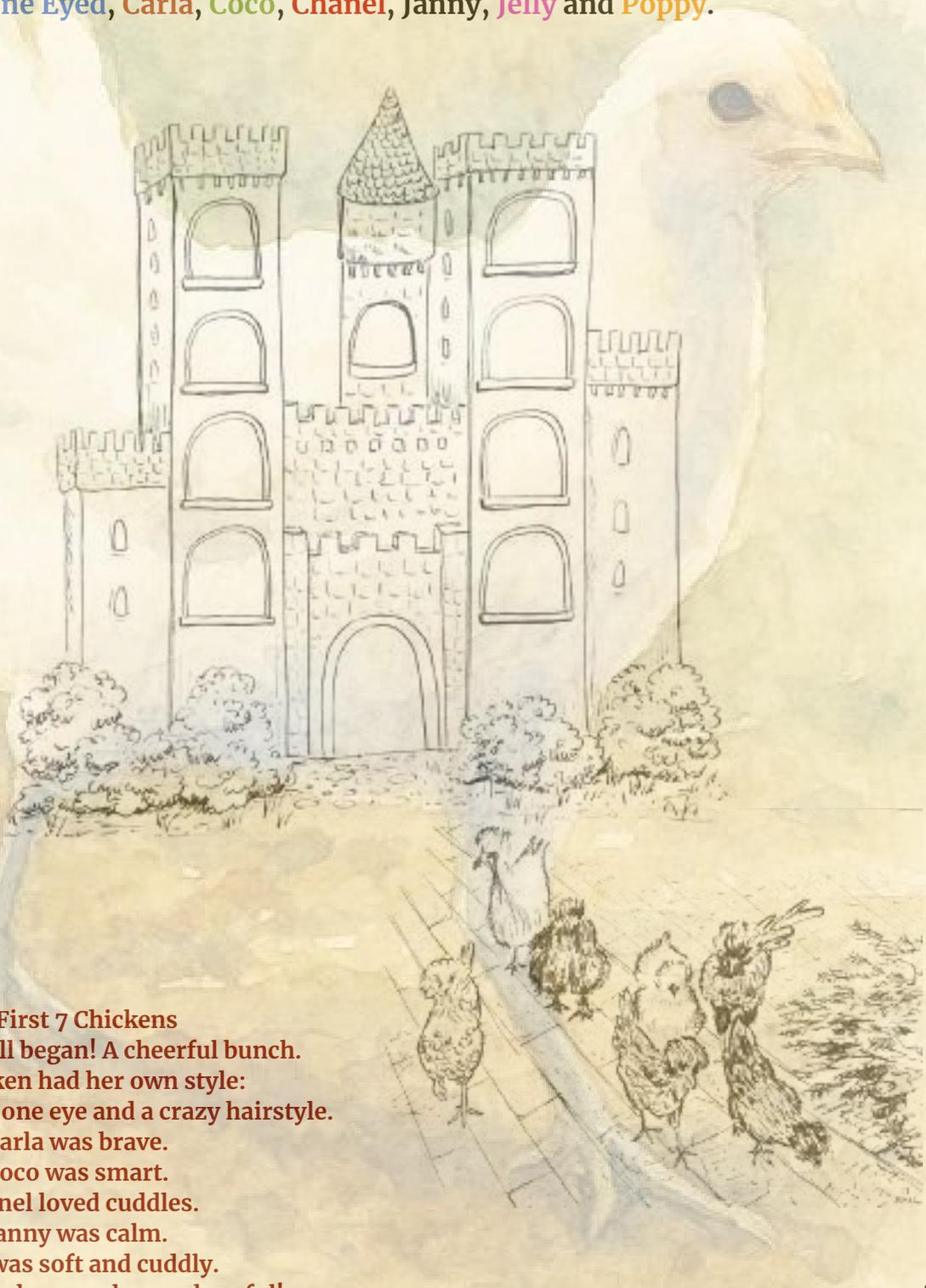
The castle was grand and beautiful, but it felt a little too quiet. Something was missing!

MISSING

That's when Helène decided to bring seven special friends into her life: **chickens!**

She carefully picked **seven** adorable chickens, each with their own special personalities:

Punky the One Eyed, Carla, Coco, Chanel, Janny, Jelly and Poppy.



The First 7 Chickens

This is how it all began! A cheerful bunch.

Each chicken had her own style:

- Punky had only one eye and a crazy hairstyle.
- Carla was brave.
- Coco was smart.
- Chanel loved cuddles.
- Janny was calm.
- Jelly was soft and cuddly.
- And Poppy, she was always cheerful!

Together they made the castle feel like a true home.

But then, something very sad happened. The owner of the castle passed away, and **Hélène had to leave.** 😥

The castle could no longer be her home, and she had to find a safe and loving place for her beloved chickens.

She searched and searched until, one day, she met Jan! When she told me about her chickens and how special they were, I knew right away that I wanted to take care of them.

And so, the seven chickens moved to a new home, a beautiful place in the countryside, where they could roam freely and live happily. This new place became the **Chicken Castle**, at a farm where chickens are loved, respected, and treated like the wonderful, intelligent creatures they are.

From that moment on, the story of the **Chicken Castle** continued to grow. More chickens arrived, some hatched from eggs, and others rescued from different places.

Today, it is home to a big, happy flock, each with their own special story, just like Punky, Carla, and the original seven chickens who started it all. And Jelly, Janny and Chanel are still part of the chicken-gang!

And so, the **adventure of Chicken Castle** lives on!

The rooster here is our first **Punky**, our one-eyed legend!



8. AND NOW: WHY IS IT FUN TO LEARN “CHICKANESE”?

Did you know that chickens do not just make one simple clucking sound? They have many different calls. They can warn each other, call their chicks, announce food, complain, chat, and even make soft happy sounds when they feel safe and relaxed. Mother hens speak differently to their babies than roosters speak to the flock, and little chicks already begin talking from a very young age.

It is great fun to watch the behavior and communication of chickens closely. By listening carefully to their sounds, we begin to understand chickens better and notice that they each have their own character, habits, and style of speaking. That is what makes Chickanese so funny and so wonderful.

The more we listen, the more we can laugh at their special behavior, enjoy their funny language, and become real chicken whisperers ourselves.”

In this video, you see Catharina, a daughter of Pastel de Nata, together with her five little chicks, talking about what is lying in the hand of one of their caretakers, Jan.

Catharina first says “ekrrrrrr” to the little ones, she wants to warn them that the hand might grab a chick. Catharina is always a little worried, that is simply part of her character.

But then you hear the chicks talking: they all say the same thing, “Oh, how tasty this is, and how lovely it is to eat together!” Piu piu piu...



So we will dive deeply into the chicken language, Chickanesse, word by word, so that you can imitate it and understand the dialogues between the chickens. On the next pages, you will find a glossary with 21 Chickanesse words and a chapter full of fun facts about chickens.

Learn to listen to the sounds chickens make so that you can understand what is going on in their little heads. Then you may be the only one in your environment who can do that... ;)

One more beautiful thing I want to share is how deeply fulfilling it can be to have chicken friends. Chickens are not only interesting and funny; they can also be deeply comforting companions. Sometimes, when you want to sit quietly with another living being, a chicken can be wonderfully present.

As soon as she feels safe in your hands, she may relax, close her eyes, and enjoy your gentle touch. You can feel her soft feathers, the warmth of her body, and the quiet rhythm of her breath. Sitting together like this can become a peaceful, almost meditative experience, relaxing both the human and the chicken. In such a moment, there is trust, calm, and a very special kind of friendship.

9. CHICKANESE: THE FIRST 21 WORDS

So chickens talk to each other and biologists know there are at least 21 'words' they use. Here you find them all! Now you can understand chickens better than anyone. But there are more words we know. Perhaps you will discover some new words too!

Listen to the chickens talking in our movies and see if you can now understand them better!

- 

1. "BUK-BUK-BUK"
The classic egg-laying announcement. Hens often repeat this sound after laying an egg.
- 

2. "BWAAAWK!"
A loud squawk, usually a warning or alarm call when they are startled or scared.
- 

3. "PRRRRRR"
A soft, rolling contentment sound often heard when they are relaxed or dust-bathing.
- 

4. "TUK-TUK-TUK"
The food call used by roosters or mother hens to tell others they found something good to eat.
- 

5. "TUK-TUK-TUK-TAK!"
A sharper, more urgent food call, signaling an especially exciting food find.
- 

6. "GGGRRR RRRRR"
A growl that means "leave me alone" or "back off," often heard when a hen is on her nest.
- 

7. "OOOH-OH-OH"
A warning sound when they see something suspicious, like a predator in the distance.
- 

8. "CLUCK-CLUCK-CLUCK"
A general conversational sound, used between chickens when roaming around.
- 

9. "CHURR-CHURR"
A mother hen's reassuring sound to her chicks.
- 

10. "CHEEP-CHEEP"
The baby chick's distress call, meaning they are cold, hungry, or lost.

11. "PEEP-PEEP"
The contentment sound of baby chicks when they are warm and safe.

12. "BOK-BOK-BOK-GAWK!"
A loud cry of panic, often when a predator is near.

13. "ERRRRR-ERR-ERR"
A low warning sound, often made when chickens sense a slow-moving threat.

14. "CRRRRROO OAAK"
A dinosaur-like croak, often made by a broody hen when someone disturbs her.

15. "GAK-GAK-GAK"
A distress call when a chicken is caught, chased, or feeling trapped.

16. "URRRRRRR"
A contented vibration, similar to a cat's purring, sometimes heard when roosting.

17. "TICK-TICK-TICK"
A "let's move" sound, often made by a rooster when guiding his hens.

18. "BUH-BUH-BUH-BUH"
A pre-laying excitement sound, made by a hen just before she lays an egg.

19. "BURRRRR"
A rolling trill that some hens make when settling onto their nest, especially broody hens getting comfortable on their eggs.

20. "DRRRRRR"
A soft rattling sound, sometimes made when a rooster is performing a courtship dance for a hen.

21. "CHUT-CHUT-CHUT"
a comforting murmur often used by a hen calling her chicks to gather under her wings.

A friend talking to Potato -
Potato says Prrrrr
I am chill here!



10. BRANCA: "GGGGRRRRRRRRRR" I AM AN ANGRY MOTHER DINOSAUR

At Chicken Castle there is a small but very brave white hen named Branca.

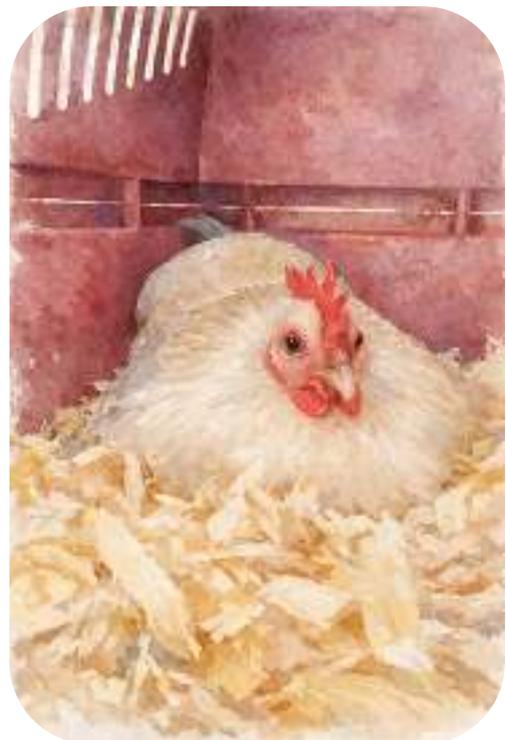
She may be little, but she is very special because she loves being cuddled, but only on her own terms. If you try to pick her up too quickly, she will run away. The trick is to pretend you are reaching for another chicken and then gently swoop in to lift her up.

Once she is on your lap, Branca melts into your hands, closes her eyes, and enjoys the soft strokes on her fluffy feathers.

Right now, Branca is sitting on eggs, and she is very protective. If you try to lift her off them, she turns into a fierce little dinosaur. Yes, chickens are ancient animals, and in the YouTube video you can hear how she growls like a real dinosaur. If we recorded her in slow motion, you would recognize the sound immediately; it truly is a dinosaur growl. You see Raul, our chicken whisperer talking to Branca.

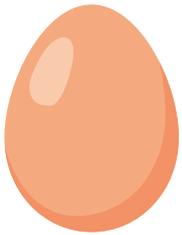
She clearly tells him, "Go away.
I need my space;
I want to become a momma."

Branca is a very good friend of
Pastel de Nata.



BONUS VIDEOS

Why Chickens Rock their Heads:



Who is the owner of the egg

Who will be on the lap for cuddling?

Chickens also like sunbathing!

Everybody comes running if Jan enters the coop

Young chicks all run to to jump on the lap

