



April 2001 – Baked Chicken recipe

Baked Chicken

Chicken dishes are possibly the most versatile of menu items. I have become a fan of 'Free Range' hens with their firm flesh, moisture and flavour, I now question some of the marketing labels I have found on chickens. One store has a 'Traditional' chicken, naturally raised, my questions is what is being done to the everyday chicken to make it 'unnatural'? You will find Free Range meats in most of the Natural Food stores in town and Natures Garden. There has been enough pressure in the market to carry Free Range meats that some of the larger grocery stores are beginning to carry a selected amount.

When baking chicken there are a few easy steps to ensuring that it will come out of the oven with crispy skin and moist meat. Make sure all the pieces are the same size, place in a shallow pan. If the pan is too deep you will end up with stewed chicken and flabby skin. Also make sure the pan is big enough that the chicken isn't to over crowded.

The lack of flavour or the slightly earthy flavours of chicken has meant that it is particularly suited to dishes that involve distinctive added flavours. When seasoning your chicken go for lots of flavour, don't be shy, there's nothing worse than bland chicken. When using fresh herbs, use the woody herbs that can with stand high heat such as Rosemary and thyme. I like to make a bed of herbs for the chicken to sit on, this way it keeps the chicken out of the fat and fills the home with the most amazing aroma while their mellow flavours season the chicken. When cooking vegetables along side the chicken, make sure that the pieces are cut large enough so as to not disappear during the cooking process. Use vegetables such as root vegetables, tomatoes and peppers that will deepen in flavour as they cook.

I like to rub some butter under the skin, this helps to baste the meat and keep it moist. You can also lay some herbs under the skin for flavour. The pan drippings can be spooned over the chicken a couple of times during the cooking process, this will help to crisp up the skin and add flavour to the finished product.

The most important rule for crisp skin is to cook the chicken in a hot oven, 425°F.

Baked Chicken with herbs, Garlic and Shallots

1 Chicken-cut into four

-rinse and pat dry, cut away excess fat and tuck the wing behind each breast.

3T Butter

-place in a large shallow pan and place pan in oven while it is heating.

-heat oven to 425*

6 Shallots-cut in half and peeled. You can substitute small onions.

6 Large garlic cloves-peeled

Leaves stripped from 10 sprigs fresh thyme

Leaves stripped from 8 sprigs fresh rosemary.

-when the butter has melted about 10mins, remove from oven and add remaining ingredients and swirl the pan to coat them in the butter.

-dredge the chicken in the herb and butter mixture and arrange skin side up in the pan.

1 1/2t Coarse salt

Pepper-freshly ground

-sprinkle the chicken generously with the salt and pepper.

-bake until the chicken has browned and is cooked through, 50 to 60 mins. Serve with the shallots and garlic along side and a drizzle of the pan drippings.

Crunchy Parmesan Chicken.

1 Chicken-cut into four.

-rinse the chicken and pat dry, cut away any excess fat and tuck the wings in behind the breast.

4T Butter

-place in a large shallow baking pan and place in the oven while it is heating.

-Heat oven to 425°F.

1/3c Parmesan.

1/2c All-purpose flour.

1 1/2t Coarse salt.

1 1/2t Herbs de Provence-you can substitute for your favourite herb, like thyme or rosemary.

1 1/4t Paprika.

1/8t Cayenne.

Freshly ground pepper.

-mix all the dry ingredients in a bowl.

-remove the pan from the oven when the butter is melted. Dredge the chicken, skin side down in the butter, then dredge in the cheese mixture using your hands to press the coating evenly on the chicken. Place skin side up in the pan. Repeat with the remaining pieces of chicken.

-bake, basting with the pan juices until the chicken is well browned and cooked through, 50-60 mins.

Honey-balsamic Baked Chicken with Tomatoes, Mushrooms and Peppers.

1 Chicken-cut into four

-rinse the chicken and pat dry, cut away the excess fat and tuck the wings in behind the breast.

1 Red pepper-remove seeds and cut into 1" cubes.

1 Yellow pepper-remove seeds and cut into 1" cubes.

1/2lb mushrooms-cleaned and cut into quarters.

14oz Canned tomatoes-drained

-in a large shallow baking pan toss all the vegetables together.

3T Olive oil

2T Balsamic Vinegar.

1T fresh rosemary.

1/2t Coarse salt

Freshly ground pepper.

-sprinkle over the vegetables and toss well.

-dredge the chicken skin side down in the vegetables so they get coated with the oil and vinegar mix, then turn them over. Sprinkle with some more salt and pepper.

1 1/2T Honey

-drizzle on the skin and bake at 425°F until well browned and cooked through.

-the vegetable will bake a hearty sauce to serve with the chicken.

Cumin Chicken with Salsa

1 Tomato-chopped

1/2 small cucumber-chopped

1/2 green pepper-chopped

1 Jalapeno pepper-finely chopped

2T red onion-finely chopped

1T cilantro-finely chopped

-mix all the salsa ingredients together and set aside.

1 Chicken-cut into four

-rinse and pat dry, cut off excess fat and tuck the wings in behind the breast.

4T Olive oil

-place in a large, shallow baking pan and place in the oven while it is heating.

-heat oven to 425°F

-remove from oven, when hot and dredge the chicken, skin side down in the oil.

2T Cumin

Freshly ground pepper

-rub on to the chicken skin.

If you have some jalapeno jelly in your fridge that needs to be used up, or maybe some sweet chili sauce, it can be drizzled on the skin, about 1 1/2T.

-bake at 425* until the skin has browned and the chicken is cooked through, 50-60mins.

-remove from the oven and remove the chicken to a serving platter and keep warm.

1T Red wine vinegar

1T Lime juice

-add to the baking pan and deglaze, pour over the salsa and stir to combine. Serve the chicken with the salsa on the side.

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