

Ahh, don't these sound delicious?

Each of these recipes gives you a simple, fast method for cooking boneless chicken breasts. Chicken with Lemon Butter sauce shows you how to make golden, lightly crusted chicken breasts with a pan sauce; Sesame Glazed Chicken is the basic methods for lightly glazing breasts; and Spice Rubbed Chicken shows you both how to grill indoors or out and how to use a spice rub. Substitute ingredients to turn any of these recipes — using the methods outlined — into many different dishes.

TIP: To ensure your chicken breasts are cooked to a safe — and still moist and tender — degree of doneness, an instant read meat thermometer is a must. Insert the thermometer horizontally into the breast until the tip is in the center. **Chicken breasts must be cooked to 160 degrees.**

• Chicken with Lemon Butter Sauce and Capers

The first three steps of this recipe are the basis for many others: they are the directions for sautéing golden, lightly crusted chicken breasts to moist perfection. An instant read meat thermometer is the key to cooking chicken to just the right safe, yet tender degree of doneness.

- 4 4-ounce boneless chicken cutlets
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 tablespoon canola or olive oil
- 1/2 cup lower sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 cup white wine

- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoon drained capers
- 1 tablespoon butter

Combine the flour, salt and pepper on a plate. Dredge the pounded chicken in the flour, coating it thoroughly and shaking off the excess.

Lay a piece of plastic wrap roughly twice as long as your cutting board over your board, with half laying to one side. Place a chicken breast half, smooth side facing up, in the center of the board and fold the plastic wrap over it. Using the smooth side of the meat pounder, start in the middle of the chicken and pound in an outward direction until it is an even 1/4-inch thickness. Repeat with the remaining chicken.

Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium high heat. Add the chicken, allowing room between the pieces. Cook 4-5 minutes per side, or until the chicken is deeply golden and cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees. Remove from pan. (Keep warm by draping loosely, or by placing, covered in foil, in a 200F oven.)

Add the broth and white wine to the skillet and bring to a boil. Boil about 4 minutes, until the liquid is reduced by half. Stir in the lemon juice and capers and boil until the sauce reduces enough to lightly coat a spoon, about 2 minutes more. Remove from heat.

Swirl in the butter. Spoon the sauce over the chicken.

Makes 4 servings
228 calories, 24 g protein, 6 g carbohydrates,

0 g fiber, 9 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 70 mg cholesterol, 585 mg sodium

• Glazed Sesame Chicken

Hoisin sauce is available in the Asian foods section of the supermarket.

- 2 tablespoons hoisin sauce
- 1 tablespoon apricot fruit spread
- 1/4 cup lower sodium nonfat chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 pound chicken breasts, pounded to 1/4-inch thickness and cut in four even pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds

Combine the hoisin, fruit spread, and chicken broth in a bowl.

Sprinkle the chicken breasts with salt and pepper. Heat the oil in a large skillet set over medium high. Add the chicken and cook 4 minutes per side, or until cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees. Remove from pan. (Do not over cook the chicken — it will return to the pan shortly).

Add the hoisin mixture to the skillet, bring to a boil and cook 1 minute. Stir; add the chicken back in the pan, turning it once to coat both sides with the glaze. Sprinkle with the sesame seeds and serve.

Makes 4 servings. 191 calories, 24 g protein, 7 g carbohydrates, 0 g fiber, 7 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 63 mg cholesterol, 511 mg sodium

• Grilled Spice Rubbed Chicken Breasts

Cook this on a grill or grill pan if you can;

a cast iron skillet also works well. But fear not—you can also make this in whatever skillet you've got, it just may not brown as evenly. If you find the chicken starts to scorch on the outside before it is cooked through, finish it in a 350 degree oven.

- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 4 (4-ounce) boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, slightly pounded to even thickness
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- Optional accompaniments: salsa and sour cream

Combine the paprika, cumin, oregano, garlic powder, sugar, thyme, salt, and cayenne pepper in a small bowl; mix well. Sprinkle the mixture onto both sides of each chicken breast half and gently rub in.

Meanwhile, coat a grill pan or grill rack with the oil and heat. Add the chicken and grill 5 minutes per side or until a thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the breast registers 160 degrees.

Makes 4 servings
164 calories, 23 g protein, 2 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber, 6 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 63 mg cholesterol, 347 mg sodium

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Pictured left to right: Renee Spresser, Kayla Weigel, Paula Strayer, and seated, Trish Fisher

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