

Italian Chicken with Balsamic Sauce

Courtesy of Carole's Creations

Prep Time:

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Serves: 4

CChints: Chicken often goes on sale. Buy it, cut off any excess fat and put it in freezer bags until needed. Be sure to date the bags. When you want chicken for a recipe, you can take it out of your freezer and thaw it in the refrigerator. The best way to cut a bell pepper is with the outside down on the cutting board. Remove all the seeds and cut into strips, flesh side up and outer skin side down. Balsamic vinegar can be purchased at your local markets and at Gourmet shops. The more expensive ones will be aged longer which gives them a bold sweet flavor. That doesn't mean the most expensive is the best.



4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts

3/4 teaspoon Italian seasoning, crushed with between your fingers

1/2 teaspoon salt and a dash of black pepper

2 tablespoons olive oil, divided

You'll need a silicone baking mat to fit your baking pan or use cooking spray

1/2 of a medium yellow, sweet onion, sliced into 1/3 inch wide strips

1 red bell peppers, sliced 1/3 inch wide strips

2 gloves minced garlic, fresh or from a jar

1 cup reduced fat or sodium chicken broth

1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, minced or 1/4 teaspoon dry

1 Tablespoon balsamic vinegar

4 servings of brown rice

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F and locate a baking pan large enough to hold 4 pieces of chicken. Cover with the baking mat or foil coated with cooking spray for easy clean up and set aside.

Prepare the rice according to package directions. The goal is to have the rice ready when the dinner is ready. If it takes 5 minutes start it near the end, but if it takes 25 minutes, start it now.

Rinse the chicken and cut off the excess fat. Smear some of the 1 teaspoons of olive oil on the chicken so the seasoning will stick. Sprinkle both sides with the crushed Italian season, salt and pepper. Over medium high heat, add the 2 teaspoons of olive oil to a large cast iron skillet because cast iron can get really hot and give your chicken a nice browned surface. If you do not have one, that's okay, just use a large skillet.

Carefully add the chicken to the hot pan and cook for 3 minutes, covered. Do not move it because you want a solid brown surface. If you have time, wash everything that came in contact with the raw chicken. Again, carefully turn the chicken over and cook for 2 minutes while reducing the temperature to medium. Transfer to your prepared baking sheet. Bake in the oven for 8-9 minutes or until the center is not pink and the juices run clear.

At the same time, add the remaining oil to the skillet over medium-low heat and add the onions and bell peppers. Stir with a wooden spoon to get the brown bits off the bottom of the pan. Cook for 2 minutes stirring occasionally. Add the broth, garlic and rosemary. Let this mixture cook and reduce for 5 minutes at a simmer. Add the vinegar and stir often for 3 minutes so the flavors can blend and intensify.

When the rice is done, drain off the excess water and keep covered until the chicken is done. Remove the chicken from the oven and put one piece on each plate. Add the rice and spoon about 1/2 cup of the balsamic sauce and peppers over both.