



Chef Vikram Vij's Chicken Breasts and Thighs

In this recipe, we cook the chicken two ways. We oven braise the chicken thighs, as the darker meat is juicier and soaks in the spices, as well as lending flavour to the broth. We marinate and grill the chicken breasts to retain the succulence of the white meat. Serve it with Red Bell Peppers and Shallot Curry (page 103) and basmati rice. Black cardamom is available at any Indian grocer. We prefer the optional dried ground ginger (known as soond) to fresh, if available; if you use soond, break any clumps into a powder. Serves 6 to 8



Chef Vikram Vij

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Ingredients:

Chicken Breasts

1 1/2 lbs boneless chicken
 half breasts, trimmed of fat,
 skin on or off
 1/3 cup canola oil
 1 Tbsp salt
 1 Tbsp ground cumin
 1 Tbsp ground coriander
 1 tsp ground cayenne pepper
 1 Tbsp paprika
 1 tsp ground dried
 ginger (optional)

Chicken Thighs

1 1/2 cups yogurt, stirred well
 1 1/2 cups puréed canned tomatoes
 1 Tbsp + 1 tsp salt
 1 1/2 tsp ground cayenne pepper
 2 Tbsp ground coriander
 3 Tbsp ground cumin
 1 Tbsp + 1 tsp paprika
 1 tsp ground dried ginger
 or 2 Tbsp + 2 tsp finely
 chopped fresh ginger
 1 Tbsp celery seed
 10 cloves
 3 or 4 pods black
 cardamom, seeds only
 7 large cloves garlic, finely
 chopped
 2 tsp canola oil
 1 1/2 lbs chicken thighs, boneless,
 skinless, trimmed of fat

1 cup water

Directions:

Chicken Breasts

Toss together chicken with oil, salt, cumin, coriander, cayenne pepper, paprika and ginger. (Do not use fresh ginger in this part of the recipe, as it will burn when you grill the chicken later.) Cover and refrigerate for at least 3 hours.

Chicken Thighs

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Mix together yogurt, tomatoes, salt, cayenne pepper, coriander, cumin, paprika, ginger, celery seed, cloves, black cardamom seeds, garlic and oil in a casserole dish. Add chicken thighs. Add water, mix well, cover and bake in the oven for about 40 minutes, or until chicken is tender and juices run a clear yellow. Remove from the oven and keep covered until ready to serve. If the thighs are very large, cut them in half to serve.

Once chicken thighs have been in the oven for 35 minutes, start grilling the chicken breasts.

To Finish Chicken Breasts

Preheat a barbecue or a stovetop ridged grill pan on high. Oil the grill, then grill chicken for 4 to 5 minutes. Flip over and grill for another 4 to 5 minutes, or until juices run a clear yellow. Slice each half breast on the diagonal into three pieces.

To Serve

Place a portion of basmati rice in the middle of each large warmed bowl. Arrange a chicken thigh and a piece of grilled chicken breast on top of the rice. Ladle 1/2 to 3/4 cup of the Red Bell Pepper and Shallot Curry (page 103) around the chicken and rice.

Wine

Sandhill Estate Vineyard Small Lots Barbera or Inniskillin Okanagan Discovery Series Malbec