

Chile n' Spice Grilled Chicken

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 40 minutes | Total Time: 3 hours

Chef's Notes

This dish goes particularly well with Char-Roasted Red Peppers and Traditional Couscous or even Moroccan Couscous

Step 1: Brining the Chicken (optional)

- 1 whole 3 to 4 lb chicken (or 4 chicken breasts)

Though brining is optional, it is HIGHLY recommended. If you are short on time, you can do a "quick or strong brine", (about 60 grams of salt per liter/quart of water). For this brine, you can keep it simple by adding just a few bay leaves and some sugar. Brine the whole chicken for about an hour or so. If using chicken breasts you will want to brine them for less time.

Otherwise, you can use a weaker brine and brine the chicken for longer (refer to the lesson on How to Brine).

Step 2: Making the Chile n' Spice Oil

- 2 tsp cumin seeds
- 2 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp fennel or caraway seeds
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- 3 dried chiles (New Mexico or Anaheim)*
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 to 2 cloves garlic
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp sherry or red wine vinegar
- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Lightly toast the spices in a small fry pan over medium heat until fragrant. Let cool before grinding them in a spice grinder. Place the ground spices into a medium bowl.

Next, toast the chiles in the same fry pan. Press the chiles into the pan to help toast them and bring out their aroma, about 1 to 2 minutes. Let cool, grind and add to the ground spices.

Crush the garlic into a paste and add it to the spice mix, along with the cayenne and salt. Next, add the sherry vinegar and olive oil and mix to combine. Taste for seasoning, adding more vinegar or salt if needed.

Step 3: Prepping the Chicken

- 1 to 2 tbsp chile n' spice oil

Remove the chicken from the brine and dry well with paper towels. Butterfly the chicken. Mix the chili oil to emulsify all of the ingredients and then rub 1 to 2 tablespoons of the oil into the chicken. Don't use too much oil or it will cause too many flare ups on the barbecue. Also be careful not to contaminate the rest of the oil with any raw chicken.

Let the chicken sit at room temperature for about 1/2 an hour.

Step 4: Grilling the Chicken

Preheat the barbecue to medium-high. Then turn off the middle burner so the chicken cooks over indirect heat. This will also help to prevent flare ups from any fat on the chicken.

Once hot, place the chicken onto the grill breast-side up. Close the lid and let cook on the first side for about 1/2 hour and then flip over onto the breast side and continue to cook for another 15 minutes or until just cooked through.

Step 5: Resting and Cutting the Chicken

Let the chicken rest for at least 10 minutes before carving and plating the chicken.

Step 6: Serving the Chicken

- reserved chile n' spice oil

Serve the chicken with individual portions of the chile n' spice oil or pass around a bowl of it. Again, just make sure you mix the oil before using to emulsify all of the ingredients.