

Simple, practical

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Simple Sweet and Sour Roasted Chicken

Place desired amount of chicken somewhat spaced (we prefer chicken thighs) in a shallow baking dish. Lightly drizzle olive oil over the skins, then liberally sprinkle with kosher salt, followed by enough finely ground black pepper to suit your taste preferences. Roast the chicken at 400°F for about an hour, until centers are cooked through and tender, and skin is crisp.

Prepare the rice by using a ratio of 1 and 1/2 cups of water for every one cup of dry rice used. Also add sea salt and pepper to the mix. (I use about 1/2 teaspoon of salt per 2 cups of dry rice, and approximately 1/8 teaspoon of pepper). Bring the rice to a boil. If the pot wasn't covered before, cover it as soon as the mix starts to boil and turn the heat down so that the pot is just simmering. Cook 20 minutes, then turn off

heat, fluff the rice with a fork, and recover the pot for at least 10 minutes.

Get your vegetables going during this time.

While everything else is cooking, prepare the sweet and sour sauce as follows -

Mix the dry ingredients first, doing your best to break up chunks of brown sugar and make sure the cornstarch is blended in. This will make the thickening process go much more smoothly. You can try an equivalent of fresh ginger root and garlic, but it is harder to get them chopped small enough to blend well. The dry ingredients are:

- 1 and 1/2 cups brown sugar
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1/8 teaspoon finely ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon ginger root powder
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder (optional)

The liquid ingredients will mix in easily at this point, but I save the pineapple and it's juice until after the first 3 liquids have dissolved the dry sugar mix. A flat wire whip is a good tool for doing all of this efficiently.

- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1/2 cup cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup water
- One 20 ounce can of pineapple tidbits in real juice

Once all the liquids are stirred in, cook it while stirring, with a wooden spoon or heat proof spatula, over medium heat until it thickens. It doesn't have to be stirred constantly at first, but more constant stirring becomes important as it gets closer to the thickening point. As it gets close to being done, it turns a darker, almost translucent brown.

When everything is on your plate, add the sweet and sour sauce as desired to rice and chicken.

The sauce can jell a bit in the refrigerator, so when using it for leftovers you might want to heat it separately and stir it smooth again. However, it doesn't taste any different if I just put some on my plate with everything and heat it all together in the microwave, so I save myself time and dirty dishes and do that.