



Chicken Delights

Give yourself a head start with these tasty rotisserie chicken recipes.

BY TONY ROSENFELD

CHANCES ARE that if you lead a busy life but like to eat well, rotisserie chickens have become part of your weeknight routine. They're tasty and convenient and form the perfect centerpiece for a partly home-cooked meal. Just pick up a bird and a fresh baguette at the market, sauté some greens or other bright vegetable, and you've got a fine dinner for the family in minutes. But if you're looking for a little more excitement without much additional work, you can use that same rotisserie bird as the foundation for dressy stews, soups, salads, sandwiches, and more. This method is as simple as it sounds: Take a rotisserie chicken home, carve and dice the meat, and pair with big flavors in the following preparations. Sounds good, right? Well, then, have at these recipes!



PULLED HONEY BBQ
CHICKEN SANDWICHES
(RECIPE ON PAGE 43)

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SPICY CHIPOTLE CHICKEN AND WHITE BEAN CHILI WITH HERB-LIME CREAM

Spicy Chipotle Chicken and White Bean Chili with Herb-Lime Cream

SERVES 4

The pairing of white beans and chicken makes this chili lighter than most, but it has more than enough substance and spice to please the family. Chipotles in adobo sauce and crumbled bacon add a wonderful smokiness to this dish.

Chili:

- 1 28-ounce can (or 2 15-ounce cans) cannellini beans, divided
- 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 1 or 2 canned chipotles in adobo sauce, plus 2 tablespoons of the sauce
- ¼ pound bacon (4 thick slices), cut into thin strips
- 1 yellow onion, finely diced
- 1 green bell pepper, finely diced
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin

- 1 cup light beer
- 2½ cups diced roast chicken (skin removed), and any juices
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

Herb-lime cream:

- 1 cup sour cream
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 lime, grated zest and juice
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

In a food processor, purée 1 cup of the beans with tomatoes and their juices, chipotles, and adobo sauce. Set aside.

In a large, sturdy Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat, cook bacon, stirring occasionally, until browned and most of the fat is rendered, about 6 minutes. Transfer to a large plate lined with paper towels.

Add onion and bell pepper to pot, sprinkle generously with salt, and cook, stirring, until vegetables soften, about 8 minutes. Add chili powder and cumin and cook, stir-

ring, for 1 minute. Add beer, raise heat to high, and cook, stirring, until liquid almost completely reduces, about 3 minutes. Add puréed bean mixture and the remaining beans and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, stir in chicken, cilantro, and thyme, and cook, covered, until mixture heats through and thickens, about 15 minutes. Season chili with salt and pepper to taste.

Meanwhile, make the herb-lime cream by mixing all the ingredients together in a small bowl.

To serve, ladle chili into large bowls and top with a healthy dollop of herb-lime cream.

Mom's Chicken Pot Pie

SERVES 6 TO 8

Everybody's mom has a slightly different take on pot pie. My mom took hers in an Italian direction with lots of mushrooms, fresh rosemary, sun-dried tomatoes and a touch of Parmesan cheese for richness. Though I've included her recipe for the crust, you can pick up a ready-made one if you prefer.

Crust:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour, more for rolling out
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ cup chilled unsalted butter, cut into 8 pieces
- ¼ cup cream cheese, cut into pieces
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ cup ice water, or more if needed

Filling:

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more for greasing baking dish
- 1 yellow onion, finely diced
- 1½ teaspoons salt, divided
- 10 ounces white mushrooms, quartered
- 3½ ounces shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons all purpose flour
- ⅓ cup dry white wine
- 3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 8 oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained and chopped
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar

- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 3 cups diced roast chicken (skin removed) and any juices
- 1½ cups frozen peas, thawed
- ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1 egg, beaten

Make the crust: Pulse flour, salt, and baking powder together in a food processor. Add butter and cream cheese and pulse until mixture forms coarse crumbs about the size of peas. In a small bowl, mix egg and ice water, then add to processor and pulse until mixture forms coarse clumps—add 1 to 2 more tablespoons water if needed. Turn dough out onto a large piece of plastic wrap and form into an 8-inch disk. Wrap and refrigerate for at least a half hour and up to 2 days.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Grease a 9-x-13-inch baking dish. Melt butter in a large Dutch oven or pot over medium heat. Add onion, sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of the salt, and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion softens and becomes translucent, about 8 minutes. Raise heat to high, add mushrooms and rosemary, sprinkle with remaining ½ teaspoon salt and black pepper, and cook, stirring, until mushrooms start to soften, about 3 minutes. Stir in flour and cook, stirring often, for 1 more minute. Add white wine and cook until it almost completely reduces, about 2 minutes. Stir in chicken broth, sun-dried tomatoes, and vinegar and bring to a boil. Mix cornstarch with 2 tablespoons water and stir into broth to thicken. Reduce to a simmer, stir in chicken, peas, and Parmesan cheese, and cook until heated through, about 5 minutes. Transfer to greased baking dish and let cool at room temperature for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, using a rolling pin, roll pie crust out on a lightly floured work surface so it's just slightly larger than the baking dish. Make a little hole in center for a vent. Using the rolling pin, lift dough up and set it over baking dish. Use thumb and forefinger to crimp dough along edges. Brush dough with egg and set baking dish on a large rimmed baking sheet to catch any juices.

Bake uncovered until crust browns all over and filling bubbles around the sides, about 45 minutes. Let cool for a couple of minutes and serve.



MOM'S CHICKEN POT PIE

Greek Salad with Herbed Chicken and Warm Pita Wedges

SERVES 4

One of my first jobs was waiting tables at a Greek-owned seafood restaurant on Boston's waterfront. A co-worker there, Jimmy, would always bring in a big bowl of Greek salad that his mother had prepared for the staff. Though Jimmy never dared reveal his mother's secrets, I've added some of the elements that made her version so special—thinly sliced scallions and fresh chopped thyme—as well as some diced roast chicken.

Vinaigrette:

- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

Salad:

- 2 cups diced roast chicken, skin removed
- 3 large pitas, cut into 3-inch wedges
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 2 romaine hearts, cored, cut in 1½-inch pieces

- 1½ cups crumbled feta cheese (about 6 ounces)
- 1½ cups ripe grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup pitted kalamata olives, drained well
- ½ seedless English cucumber, cut in ½-inch dice
- 3 scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced

Make the vinaigrette: In a blender, purée mustard and vinegar, then add oil in a slow, steady stream. Stir in thyme, oregano, salt, and pepper. Season with more salt and pepper to taste.

Preheat oven to 425°F. In a medium bowl, toss chicken with 2 tablespoons of the vinaigrette and set aside.

In a large bowl, toss pita wedges with oil and thyme and a light sprinkling of salt. Transfer pita to a rimmed baking sheet lined with aluminum foil and bake, flipping every 5 minutes, until browned and crisp, about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, arrange romaine, chicken, feta, tomatoes, olives, cucumber, and scallions on a large platter and drizzle with half of the remaining vinaigrette. Place warm pita in a basket and serve with salad and remaining vinaigrette.

Ziti with Chicken and Broccoli

SERVES 4

This is one of those classic dishes that always finds its way onto Italian-American restaurant menus. The trick to this dish is tossing the pasta with the sauce for a minute or two in the pan so that the flavors have a chance to mix and meld.

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- ½ pound 1½-inch broccoli florets (about 3 cups)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup white wine
- ½ cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 2½ cups diced roast chicken (skin removed) and any juices
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- ¾ pound ziti

Bring a large pot of water to a boil.

Heat oil and garlic in a large skillet or sauté pan over medium heat, stirring, until garlic starts to brown and becomes very fragrant, about 3 minutes. Add broccoli, raise heat to medium high, sprinkle with salt, and cook, stirring often, until broccoli turns dark green and starts to brown, about 2 minutes. Add white wine and cook, stirring, until it almost completely reduces, about 2 minutes. Add broth, chicken, and thyme, bring to a boil, cover, and cook until broccoli is crisp-tender and mixture is hot, about 3 minutes. Stir in half of the cheese and a generous sprinkling of black pepper. Remove from heat.

While chicken and broccoli are cooking, stir a couple tablespoons of salt into boiling water, add pasta, and cook, stirring occasionally, until just tender, about 10 minutes. Drain pasta and return to pot. Add chicken and broccoli, and cook over medium heat, stirring, for 2 or 3 minutes to allow flavors to meld. Season to taste with salt and pepper, sprinkle with remaining cheese, and serve.

Pulled Honey BBQ Chicken Sandwiches

SERVES 4

This sandwich plays on the classic pulled pork sandwiches of the South, only here roast chicken takes the place of the pork. (Use plenty of dark meat, as it has a richer flavor and juicier texture.) Thinly sliced cabbage adds crunch and a little Southern flair.

- 3 cups thinly sliced green cabbage (about 6 ounces)
- 5 tablespoons cider vinegar, divided
- 1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ⅓ cup honey
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper



ZITI WITH CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI

- ½ to 1 teaspoon Tabasco or other hot sauce
- 3 cups shredded roasted chicken
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- 4 bulky rolls, split and toasted
- 4 slices sharp cheddar cheese (about ¼ pound)

In a large bowl, toss cabbage with 1 tablespoon of the vinegar, oil, and salt.

Set aside.

In a small saucepan, heat remaining vinegar, honey, ketchup, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, pepper, and hot sauce until it comes to a simmer. Fold in chicken and scallions, turn off heat, and let sit for 5 minutes.

To make sandwiches, layer chicken on bottoms of rolls, then top with cheese, cabbage, and tops of rolls. Serve immediately. ■



GREEK SALAD WITH HERBED CHICKEN AND WARM PITA WEDGES