

Quick & Easy Chicken Carnitas

Rachel Wolf: Clean

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Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken or equivalent in chicken parts (Boneless/skinless is fine, bone-in skin-on is fine, too. See how flexible we are? Use what you have. Mine is a whole, homegrown bird with skin and bones.)
- 1 tb ground cumin
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp oregano
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/8 tsp cayenne (optional)
- 1/3 cup fresh lime juice (from 1-2 limes)
- 1 head garlic, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 pint [chicken broth](#) or stock

At the table

Serve with any or all of the accoutrements below. (I normally opt for all.)

- Fresh pear salsa (recipe below)
- 1 lime cut in half, then eighths
- Fresh cilantro, chopped
- Sriracha or other heat of your choice
- Chopped red onion
- Tortillas, chips, rice, or lettuce (or all of the above)
- Live fermented cortido or kraut

Instructions

1. Pour stock into Instant Pot or slow cooker. Place chicken on top of broth, then pour lime juice over the chicken. Top with spices and garlic.

2. Cook in your Instant Pot for 40 minutes, natural release. My IP is older and doesn't have different pressure settings, so if you have a [fancy newfangled one](#), (afflink) you're on your own. Chicken parts will require less time than a whole bird.

If using a slow cooker, set on low for approximately 8 hours.

Your goal is a chicken that is fully cooked and tender. Err on the side of slightly overcooked. Our goal is ridiculously tender meat.

3. Remove chicken and set aside on a cookie sheet until cool enough to handle. Reserve liquid in the cooker until the next step.

4. When chicken is cool enough to comfortably handle, preheat your broiler to high. Remove bones and skin, reserving for [stock-making](#). * I sometimes toss the skin back into the liquid in the pot for a minute to do some spice recovery, then remove, but it's not necessary.

5. Using your hands or a couple of forks, shred chicken into bite-sized strips and return to the cookie sheet. Pour 2/3 of your cooking liquid over meat, approximately 1 cup, and stir or toss to combine.

6. Place under broiler with rack pretty close to the heat. Broil for 10 to 12 minutes, then remove, stir, and return to broiler for another 10 to 12 minutes.

After 2 rounds the edges of the meat should be starting to get crispy and amazing. Depending on your broiler heat, you'll want to do this a total of 2 to 5 times until your meat looks something like the photo below, with a good mix of dark crispy bits and soft, tender pieces.

(This is a good time to make your pear salsa, below.)

7. When chicken is crispy in parts but still juicy and tender it's ready to eat! Serve with tortillas or lettuce, pear salsa (below), limes, and other toppings listed above.

For Fresh Pear Salsa

- 2 large or 3 medium fresh, ripe pears
- 1 small clove of garlic, minced
- 1/2 bunch fresh cilantro
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 2 green onions, sliced (or 1/2 red onion, minced)
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika
- pinch of cayenne (optional)
- salt to taste

Instructions

Core and stem pear, then chop into bite-sized pieces. Combine with remaining ingredients and stir to combine. Taste, adjust seasoning, and eat.

And eat.

And... eat.