

AIR FRIED CHICKEN THIGHS

After a recent party, I had a whole bunch of miscellaneous hors d'oeuvres left in the fridge. For those of you that follow my blog, you know I hate to waste food, so I came up with a simple way to use them in stuffed chicken thighs. You could use similar leftovers from your fridge as a substitute. Maybe you've got some roasted peppers or sliced olives or babaganoush hiding behind the milk. Take a look! You might not have to call Uber Eats tonight after all.

INGREDIENTS (serves 4)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup tapenade spread

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup goat cheese, crumbled

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup caramelized onions

4 skinless boneless chicken thighs

2 eggs, beaten

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour, seasoned with salt and pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup panko, seasoned with salt and pepper

Salt and pepper to taste

Canola oil for brushing

PREPARATION

Preheat air fryer to 400 degrees.

Lay out of piece of clear wrap on top of a cutting board. Spread out a chicken thigh and cover with another piece of clear wrap. Pound out each thigh until thin, about $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Remove the clear wrap. Season with salt and pepper.

Set out a clean piece of clear wrap and place one thigh on

top. Spread a light layer of tapenade on the chicken thighs. Sprinkle goat cheese and onions down the center of each thigh. Using the clear wrap as a guide, roll up each thigh as tightly as possible, making sure the wrap itself doesn't get caught in the folds. Once the thigh is rolled up, place the clear wrap around it and tighten so they look like sausages or a sushi roll. Repeat for each thigh. Place the wrapped thighs in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.

Carefully unwrap each thigh, then dredge each first in flour, then eggs, then panko.

Lightly brush each thigh with oil.

Place chicken thighs seam down in air fryer. Lower temp to 380 and bake for 15 minutes. Turn thighs over and bake for 10 more minutes. Remove from fryer and let rest for five minutes.

Slice and serve with salad. Spoon some tapenade on top of chicken slices.

ROASTED VEGGIES

It's easy to get bored with side dishes, particularly at this time of year. There are no local fresh tomatoes for a bright salad or piles of basil to turn into a pesto sauce. In the dead of winter, it's all about the root vegetables. So here is a simple and very tasty recipe that might cheer you up as you wait for spring to show its colors.

INGREDIENTS (serves 6-8)

1 butternut squash, skin and seeds removed, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ " squares

1 fennel bulb, stalks removed, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ " squares

1 large red onion, skin removed, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ " squares

2 large carrots, skins removed, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ " squares

1 large parsnip, skin removed, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ " squares

1 large potato, skin removed (optional), cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ " squares

olive oil

1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder

salt and pepper

PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

Line two sheet pans with aluminum foil. Spread out the squash, fennel, and red onion on one pan, keeping each vegetable in its own section. Spread out the carrots, parsnip, and potato on the other pan, keeping each vegetable in its own section. Don't mix the veggies because some may cook faster than others and you'll want to remove those so they don't burn.

Drizzle olive oil over the veggies, then season with rosemary, garlic powder, salt and pepper. With your hands, mix each individual vegetable so that the oil and spices are evenly distributed.

Place pans in the oven. If you can fit both pans on one level, then do so. If not, place them in the center and bottom of your racks, trying to leave some space between them. Roast for ten minutes, then take out and stir, still trying to keep each veggie separate from the other. Roast for another ten minutes, and stir again.

Lower temp to 375 and if your pans are on separate levels, flip the position of the pans and roast another ten minutes. At some point, the onions and fennel and possibly the squash may cook faster, so feel free to remove them as needed so they don't burn. Set aside.

Stir vegetables and place back in the oven for the final ten minutes. (Total cook time 40 minutes.)

Place all the vegetables in a serving bowl and mix together.

DRIED MUSHROOM SOUP

A chef friend of ours often generously gifts us with a mishmash of ingredients that he over ordered. The latest to hit our shelves is a big bag of dried mushrooms and some rice noodles. Do I hear soup? Here's a tasty dish using Asian spices.

INGREDIENTS (serves 4)

2 cups of thinly sliced dried Chinese mushrooms

2 star anise

1 cinnamon stick

2 cardomon pods

6 coriander seeds

1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

1 bay leaf

2 tablespoons canola oil

2 shallots chopped

12 fresh shiitake mushrooms sliced

2 cloves of garlic minced

1" knob of ginger minced

1 cup cooked chicken, cubed in $\frac{1}{2}$ " pieces

2 cups of baby spinach

1 quart of chicken bone broth or vegetable broth

1 tablespoon of soy sauce

1 tablespoon of mirin

1 teaspoon of fish sauce

1 package of rice noodles

basil leaves for garnish

salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

Soak the dried mushrooms in a medium sized bowl of warm water for 30 minutes. Slice the mushrooms and reserve the water.

Place the star anise, cinnamon stick, cardamon pods, coriander seeds, red pepper flakes and bay leaf into a sachet with a string, or use a piece of cheesecloth and tie some butchers twine around it. Set aside.

In a medium sized dutch oven, heat the oil. Add the shallots and cook until translucent, about three minutes. Add the fresh mushrooms, garlic and ginger. Saute for two to three minutes. Add in the cooked chicken and spinach and stir for one minute.

Pour in the bone broth and the dried mushrooms with the

mushroom water. Add the spice sachet, soy sauce, mirin and fish sauce. Bring to a boil and then simmer for twenty minutes.

Add in the rice noodles and cook as per the package instructions. Do not add additional liquid. Remove the spice sachet. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

To serve, ladle into soup bowls. Garnish with basil leaves.