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Chicken Enchiladas

By Susie Iventosch



Photo Susie Iventosch

Fresh avocado slices for garnish

*Serve with refried beans and/or rice and guacamole.

Chicken filling

2 1/2 pounds chicken breast tenders or boneless, skinless chicken breasts

1 cup medium-hot salsa

2 cups water-or enough to cover chicken in pot

1/2 yellow onion, coarsely chopped

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon pepper

2 large cans mild Ortega chilies diced (fire roasted or roasting your own are excellent, too)

1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro

1-2 tablespoons Louisiana hot sauce (more or less, depending on your heat tolerance!)

DIRECTIONS

Place chicken tenders in a large, frying pan, at least three inches deep. Pour salsa and water over chicken. Add onions and salt and pepper. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, and simmer on stovetop for approximately 20-25 minutes, or until tenders are completely cooked through. Remove from stove and cool. Once cooled, remove tenders and discard liquid. Shred chicken using two forks. Place chicken in large bowl. Add 1/2 cup grated cheese, 1/2 cup enchilada sauce, Ortega chilies, cilantro and hot sauce. Mix well. Add salt and pepper as needed to taste.

To Assemble:

Heat tortillas in microwave for one to two minutes just enough to make them pliable. Lay tortillas on flat surface and spoon about 1/4 cup of chicken filling on each tortilla. Spoon just a teaspoon or two of extra cooled enchilada sauce over filling and sprinkle one tablespoon of extra cheese over sauce. Roll tightly into a log. Place in greased or sprayed casserole dish side by side. (Can be made a day or two ahead, and refrigerated or kept frozen for several weeks, but do not cover with remaining enchilada sauce until ready to heat and serve.)

To Serve:

Pour remaining sauce over enchiladas and sprinkle evenly with remaining cheese. Dust the top of each enchilada with paprika for color. Bake at 400° F for 15-20 minutes, or until cheese is bubbly and slightly browned. Garnish each enchilada with a dollop of plain yogurt, sliced black (or green) olives, a sprig of cilantro and serve with guacamole and refried beans on the side.

Marilyn Greco's Enchilada Sauce

If you haven't tried homemade enchilada sauce before, you'll be surprised at how easy it is. I had always wondered how to make it, when one day Marilyn told me she makes a great enchilada sauce. She was right. This is heads and tails above the canned version.

INGREDIENTS - can double for extra sauce to serve on the side

2 tablespoons canola oil

3-4 tablespoons chili powder (this makes the huge difference for the sauce ... make sure you pick a chili

(Makes 12)

This is the dish I love to deliver to friends and family when they need a little extra help getting food on the table, whether it's because they have a lot of family in town, they're throwing a big potluck party, or they've been sick and out of cooking commission. The recipe makes a lot and can be easily doubled, and it stores well in the refrigerator or freezer!

INGREDIENTS

12 large flour tortillas (can use corn, but will need about 16 corn tortillas)

1 recipe chicken filling (recipe follows)

1 recipe Marilyn Greco's Enchilada Sauce (below) or, substitute canned sauce

2 1/2 cups grated taco blend cheese (Monterey Jack and medium sharp cheddar, and can also use low fat cheese or feta)

2 teaspoons paprika for garnish

1 can (3.5 ounces) sliced ripe olives

3/4 cup plain nonfat yogurt for garnish

Fresh cilantro sprigs for garnish

powder that is not too terribly hot!)

2 tablespoons flour

3/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

1/4 teaspoon dried oregano

1/4 teaspoon cumin powder

2 teaspoons cider vinegar

2 cups water

DIRECTIONS

In a medium pot, heat oil and with a wire whisk add chili powder, flour, seasonings and spices and brown slightly over medium heat to open up the flavors. Slowly add hot water, stirring all the while with a whisk to keep from clumping. Bring to a boil and continue on low boil for about 10 minutes, adding more water as necessary for desired thickness. Stir in vinegar. Cool and refrigerate until ready to use. Can store for several weeks in the refrigerator.



Constance's chicken simmers in a large frying pan. Photo provided

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