

Ava's Favorite Baked Chicken

I've cooked a lot of chicken in my time. It's one of those things that can turn out either juicy, tender, and full of flavor, or dry, rubbery, and bland. There's a lot that goes into cooking chicken well, but it doesn't have to be difficult.

Baked chicken has never been a favorite of mine, until I learned to do it properly. It's not as simple as plopping in a pan and sticking said pan in the oven. It needs a little prep work beforehand. I'm talking about brining. Brining is a simple technique that turns plain chicken into tender morsels of deliciousness, and once you try it, you'll never go back. All you have to do is soak your chicken in salt water for 15-20 minutes before baking, and you will see an immediate improvement.

Of course, that's not all it takes. Chicken is pretty bland, so you need to season it before baking, and I've found my favorite blend. It's called Ava's Favorite Burger seasoning. And, yes, it's delicious for burgers, but how useful is a seasoning that you only use on one thing? So I tried it here, and it knocked this chicken out of the park. It's spicy and savory, and livens up this chicken like nothing else.

I used bone-in breasts here, because these typically have more flavor. They take longer to cook, however, so they may not work for a weeknight. You can definitely use this method for boneless, though. You'll just need to cut your cooking time about in half, and watch carefully to make sure they don't overcook. A meat thermometer is crucial here — cook until your chicken is 165 degrees. Much more than that, and you'll be back to dry chicken breasts.

Serve these with whatever veggies you like. A green veggie and mashed potatoes makes an easy comforting meal, perfect for a Sunday night before a long week.

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Serves 4

Prep time: 60 minutes

Ingredients:

4 tablespoons Colima Sea Salt
1 pound bone-in chicken breasts
2 tablespoons Ava Jane's Kitchen Avocado Oil
2 teaspoons Ava's Favorite Burger seasoning

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.

Put the salt in a large bowl and fill with warm water. Add the chicken and let it brine for about 20 minutes. You can brine for several hours in the refrigerator as well.

Rinse the chicken and pat dry. Transfer to a casserole dish. Brush with the avocado oil,

and season with the Ava's Favorite Burger seasoning.

Bake for 35-45 minutes, until the chicken is browned and reaches an internal temperature of 165 degrees F. Let rest for 10-15 minutes before serving.