

Chicken (dark meat) (Poultry & Eggs)

Interesting facts: In 1980 about 10% of a chicken's weight was breast meat. In 2007 chickens were about 21% breast meat. More than half of all chicken entrees ordered in restaurants are for fried chicken. The average American eats over 80 pounds of chicken each year. In 1950, approximately 80% of chickens were 'free range', by 1980 only 1% were 'free range.' Today it is back up to 12%.

How to select: Purchase organic, free range, hormone & antibiotic free chickens. Skin and bone has the best flavor.

How to clean and store: Raw foods should be placed on a lower shelf in the fridge. As well as being wrapped in plastic, raw meats should be placed on a tray or plate, or placed in a sealed container, to avoid meat juices dripping onto other food. Uncooked chicken meat should be stored in a refrigerator at a maximum temperature of 4°C. Freeze in a freezer bag for 2-3 months. Defrost in the refrigerator. Most chickens do not require rinsing before cooking.

How to prepare and cook: Sautéing, Grilled and Roasted

Sautéing: Pat the chicken dry with a paper towel. Preheat 1 to 2 tablespoons of olive oil or butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add the chicken and cook for 8 to 12 minutes, turning twice until the chicken is no longer pink and a nice golden brown crust has formed.

Grilled: Trim the chicken: remove any large areas of fat and trim off excess flaps of skin (a sharp scissors works well for this), but leave the skin on for grilling. Grill, skin side down, over direct medium heat for about 10 minutes. Turn and cook until almost done, another 5-10 minutes, depending on size.

Slow and Low Roasted: Preheat the oven to 225 °F. Using a glass roasting dish place the chicken skin side up in the pan without crowding. Put lid on and cook for 4-5 minutes per pound of chicken. If you want to brown the skin you can place under broiler first for 5-8 minutes and then put in the oven. Inside temperature should read 165 °F.

Recipe idea:

Chicken Encrusted in Almonds: 12 boneless, skinless thighs cut in half and placed between two sheets of waxed paper; pound using a meat mallet until ¼ inch thick. Mix together ½ cup almond meal, 2 minced cloves of garlic, zest (grated skin) 1 organic lemon, ¼ teaspoon sea salt and black pepper; set aside in a pie tin. In a bowl; whip up 1 egg with 1/8 cup water; set aside. In a large skillet over medium heat 2 tablespoons ghee or avocado oil. Dredge the chicken in egg and then coat with almond mixture and place enough pieces to sauté in the pan. Do not crowd. When light brown about 2-3 minutes turn over and sauté for another 2-3 minutes. Place in a warm oven until all pieces are cooked. Serve.