

Vietnamese Lemongrass Chicken and Nuoc Cham Dipping Sauce!

This Whole30-compatible and low carb Vietnamese Lemongrass Chicken is packed with umami and should become a regular weeknight meal! Includes air fryer instructions and a paleo *nuoc cham* dipping sauce, too!



4.84 from 43 votes

Course: Dinner Cuisine: Vietnamese

Keyword: chicken, gluten-free, lemongrass chicken, low carb, nomnompaleo, paleo, Whole30

Servings: 6 servings Author: Michelle Tam

Ingredients

Lemongrass Chicken

- ¼ cup minced shallots
- 1 large lemongrass stalk trimmed
- 3 garlic cloves minced
- 2 teaspoons Diamond Crystal kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger fresh ginger contains an enzyme which can break down the chicken
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- zest from 1 lime
- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Red Boat fish sauce
- 1 teaspoon honey or 1 tablespoon of orange juice if you're doing a Whole30
- 8 chicken thighs bone-in and skin-on (~3½ pounds)
- Lime wedges fresh herbs, lettuce, and pickled vegetables (optional)

Paleo Nuoc Cham Dipping Sauce

- 3 tablespoons Red Boat fish sauce
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup or ¼ cup apple or pineapple juice (for Whole30)
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 small garlic clove minced

Instructions

Vietnamese Lemongrass Chicken

1. Let's make the marinade. Grab a large bowl and add the minced shallot.
2. Trim the fresh lemongrass stalk and grate finely with a microplane rasp grater (my preferred method) or smash the stalk with a meat pounder and cut finely against the grain of the fibers. The finer the dice, the less lemongrass fiber you'll be picking out of your teeth when you eat the chicken later. Refer to this tutorial if you have more questions on how to trim lemongrass.
3. Add 3 tablespoons of the finely minced lemongrass to the bowl, along with the garlic, Diamond Crystal kosher salt, ginger, black pepper, lime zest, extra virgin olive oil, fish sauce, and honey (sub 1 tablespoon of orange juice if doing a Whole30). Stir to combine well.
4. Plop in the chicken thighs in the bowl and massage the marinade all over the bird parts.
5. Cover the bowl and let it marinate for at least one hour and up to 24 hours in the fridge.

6. When you're ready to cook the chicken thighs, heat the oven to 400°F convection or 425°F non-convection, with the oven rack in the middle.
7. Place the chicken **skin-side down** on a stainless steel wire rack placed on top of a foil lined baking sheet.
8. Pop the chicken in the oven and bake for 20 minutes. Flip the chicken **skin-side up** and rotate the tray 180 degrees. Bake for an additional 20-25 minutes or until the skin is evenly browned and the thickest part of the meat registers 175°F on an instant-read thermometer.
9. **Cooking in air fryer?** Air fry the chicken in batches at 400°F for a total of 20 to 25 minutes, starting skin side down and flipping skin side up at the halfway point (~10-12 min mark). The chicken is finished when the thickest part of the thighs reach 175°F on a meat thermometer and the skin is golden brown.
10. Serve the chicken with lettuce, pickled veggies, fresh herbs, and lime wedges. Want a dipping sauce? Make the Paleo Nuoc Cham below!

Paleo Nuoc Cham Dipping Sauce

1. In a small bowl, combine the fish sauce, maple syrup, lime juice, water, red pepper flakes, and garlic. Stir well to combine and adjust seasoning as needed. (If on a Whole30, substitute apple juice or pineapple juice for the maple syrup. Start with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup and add more to taste.)
2. The dipping sauce can be stored in a sealed container in the fridge for up to 4 days.

Notes

Make ahead instructions:

- If you double the recipe, you can save even more time by blitzing all of the roughly chopped marinade ingredients in a high powered blender!
- Also, you can marinate the chicken in the fridge for up to two days before you cook it. I don't love freezing uncooked marinated chicken thighs and cooking them later because the skin can get kind of rubbery. I prefer to roast all the thighs and freeze the cooked chicken.

How to store leftovers:

You can store roasted Vietnamese Lemongrass Chicken in the fridge for up to 4 days or freeze it for up to 3 months.

Nutrition

Calories: 511kcal | Carbohydrates: 12g | Protein: 32g | Fat: 37g | Saturated Fat: 9g | Polyunsaturated Fat: 7g | Monounsaturated Fat: 17g | Trans Fat: 0.2g | Cholesterol: 189mg | Sodium: 1690mg | Potassium: 509mg | Fiber: 0.5g | Sugar: 8g | Vitamin A: 180IU | Vitamin C: 3mg | Calcium: 41mg | Iron: 2mg