**Chinese Lemon Chicken**

*Serves 4*

Ingredients

* 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs, cut into 1-inch cubes
* 1 teaspoon white sesame seeds
* 1 1/2 cups corn-starch
* 3 cups peanut or vegetable oil, plus 1 tablespoon for stir-frying
* Lemon slices (optional)

Marinade

* 1 tablespoon soy sauce
* 1 teaspoon sesame oil
* 2 large egg whites

Sauce

* 2 garlic cloves, minced
* 1/2 tablespoon minced ginger
* 1/4 cup chicken stock
* 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
* 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
* 1 tablespoon soy sauce
* 2 tablespoons sugar
* 1 teaspoon corn-starch, dissolved in 1 tablespoon water

Instructions

1. Marinate the chicken: In a medium bowl, combine the soy sauce, sesame oil, and egg whites. Add the chicken and stir gently to coat. Let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes.
2. In a small dry pan, toast the sesame seeds for about 1 minute, or until they become lightly brown and aromatic. Transfer to a dish and set aside.
3. Spread the 1 1/2 cups of corn-starch in a large bowl or deep plate. Toss the chicken cubes in the corn-starch and shake off any excess before frying.
4. Heat the peanut oil in a wok or heavy-bottomed pot until it registers 350 degrees F on an instant-read oil thermometer. Working in 2 or 3 batches, add the chicken cubes and fry until lightly golden on the outside and cooked through, about 3 minutes. Remove the chicken with a slotted spoon and drain on a plate lined with paper towels. (Optional: To get the chicken extra-crispy, allow the chicken to drain and cool for about 5 minutes, then return the chicken to the wok to fry for another 30 seconds, until golden brown.)
5. Transfer the oil to a heat-proof container. (It will take about 1 hour to fully cool, after which you can transfer it to a container with a tight lid to dispose of it.) If you used a wok to deep-fry, you can reuse it to make the sauce next by just wiping down the insides with a paper towel. If you used a heavy-bottomed pot for deep-frying, switch to a clean wok or large skillet.
6. Prepare the sauce: Heat the wok or skillet over medium-high heat until a bead of water sizzles and evaporates on contact. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon peanut oil and swirl to coat the bottom. Add the garlic and ginger and cook briefly until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the chicken stock, lemon juice, lemon zest, soy sauce, and sugar. Stir until the sugar is dissolved and simmer until the liquid is reduced by half. Stir in the corn-starch mixture to thicken the sauce.
7. Remove from the heat and toss the fried chicken in the sauce. Transfer to a serving dish and garnish with the toasted sesame seeds and lemon slices (if using).