



Waldorf Chicken Salad

From *America's Test Kitchen* Season 13: Chicken Classics, Improved

WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:

Recipes for chicken salad are only as good as the chicken itself. If the chicken is dry or flavorless, no amount of dressing or add-in will camouflage it. To ensure silky, juicy, and flavorful chicken, we used a method based on *sous vide* cooking (submerging vacuum-sealed foods in a temperature-controlled water bath.) Our ideal formula was four chicken breasts and 6 cups of cold water heated to 170 degrees and then removed from the heat, covered, and left to stand for about 15 minutes. This yielded incomparably moist chicken that was perfect for chicken salad.

Serves 4 to 6

To ensure that the chicken cooks through, start with cold water in step 1 and don't use breasts that weigh more than 8 ounces or are thicker than 1 inch. This salad can be served in a sandwich or spooned over leafy greens.

INGREDIENTS

- Salt and pepper
- 4** (6- to 8-ounce) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, no more than 1 inch thick, trimmed
- 1/2** cup mayonnaise
- 2** tablespoons lemon juice
- 1** teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2** teaspoon ground fennel seeds
- 2** celery ribs, minced
- 1** shallot, minced
- 1** Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored, halved, and cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1/2** cup walnuts, toasted and chopped coarse
- 1** tablespoon minced fresh tarragon
- 1** teaspoon minced fresh thyme

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Dissolve 2 tablespoons salt in 6 cups cold water in Dutch oven. Submerge chicken in water. Heat pot over medium heat until water registers 170 degrees. Turn off heat, cover pot, and let stand until chicken registers 165 degrees, 15 to 17 minutes.
- 2.** Transfer chicken to paper towel-lined tray. Refrigerate until chicken is cool, about 30 minutes. While chicken cools, whisk mayonnaise, lemon juice, mustard, ground fennel, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper together in large bowl.
- 3.** Pat chicken dry with paper towels and cut into 1/2-inch pieces. Transfer chicken to bowl with mayonnaise mixture. Add celery, shallot, apple, walnuts, tarragon, and thyme; toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve. (Salad can be refrigerated for up to 2 days.)

TECHNIQUE

THE GENTLEST WAY TO COOK CHICKEN

Our easy mock *sous vide* method guarantees supremely tender, juicy chicken.

START COLD

HEAT TO 170°

FINISH OFF HEAT
