

Easy Chicken Parmesan

Prep: 15 mins

Cook: 35 mins

Total: 50 mins

Servings: 4 servings

Chicken parmesan, or parmigiana as you may see it on countless Italian-American restaurant menus, is very much an American dish that has roots in the East Coast Italian diaspora. It is inspired by eggplant parmesan (breaded eggplant in tomato sauce and cheese) and cotoleta (fried breaded chicken or veal served with sauce). The resulting dish is the perfect combination of crispy breaded chicken, rich cheesy goodness, and tangy tomato sauce.

How To Make Chicken Parmesan

Chicken parmesan starts with boneless skinless chicken breasts which are slightly flattened to encourage even cooking. The chicken is then breaded with fine breadcrumbs and pan-fried in olive oil until golden. The browned chicken breasts are nestled in tomato sauce and blanketed with mozzarella before baking to bubbly comfort food perfection.

Why Do the Chicken Breasts Need to be Flattened?

Because modern chicken breasts are large, they tend to cook unevenly, with the outside becoming overcooked by the time the inside of the breast reaches a safe temperature. Flattening the breasts slightly with a meat mallet or rolling pin encourages quick, even cooking. If this process intimidates you, you can cut the chicken breasts in half horizontally, or ask your butcher to butterfly or slice chicken breasts into cutlets.

What Is In Chicken Parmesan?

Chicken parmesan is a very simple dish with few ingredients, especially if you spring for store-bought sauce. The main ingredients are chicken breasts, breadcrumbs, tomato sauce, and mozzarella, and parmesan cheese. We use jarred sauce here to make this a weeknight meal, but you can make your own if you have the time.

How To Serve Chicken Parmesan

Serve this easy chicken parmesan with a side of garlic bread and a simple green salad or bright and tangy citrus salad for a wholesome weekday meal. Leftovers can be heated and served on hoagie rolls with greens.

Tips for Making Chicken Parmesan Recipe

- When flattening the chicken breasts - Use a firm but glancing motion rather than forceful blows. Getting your frustrations out in this way may be appealing, but you want to even out the shape of the meat and make it a bit thinner, not pound it into a pulp.
- Taste your breadcrumbs - Taste your seasoned breadcrumbs before using them to dredge the chicken. If they are very bland, you can add more salt, pepper, or Italian seasonings to amp up the flavor. Remember: the breadcrumbs should taste a little too salty and flavorful on their own because the flavor will be diluted on the chicken breasts.
- Patience is key - Don't rush the process of browning the breaded chicken in the olive oil. The oil should be at a moderate temperature or you risk burning the breading.
- Use premade sauce or breadcrumbs - To help get dinner on the table a little faster, take some help from the grocery store. Pick up a jar of pasta sauce and some pre-seasoned breadcrumbs to cut down on prep time!

What You'll Need To Make Chicken Parmesan Recipe

- A Meat Tenderizer
- A Casserole Dish
- A Frying Pan

Ingredients

- 4 boneless chicken breasts, about 1 1/2 pounds
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup seasoned breadcrumbs, preferably Italian flavored
- Olive oil
- 8 slices low-moisture mozzarella cheese
- 1 (24-ounce) jar pasta sauce
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 8 ounces spaghetti, or linguine

Steps to Make It

1. Gather the ingredients.
2. Lightly grease a 9x13-inch baking dish. Heat the oven to 350 F.
3. Put 4 boneless chicken breasts between sheets of plastic wrap and gently pound to about 1/2 inch in thickness. Use a rolling pin or the flat side of a meat mallet.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together 1 large egg and 1/2 cup milk.
5. Place 1/2 cup seasoned breadcrumbs in a different wide and shallow bowl.
6. Dip the flattened chicken breasts in the milk and egg mixture and then in the seasoned breadcrumbs, turning each piece to coat it evenly.
7. In a large skillet or sauté pan heat 1 inch of olive oil over medium heat until hot (if you dip a corner of a breaded chicken breast in the oil it should sizzle briskly). Be careful not to burn it, as olive oil achieves the smoke point fairly fast.
8. Brown the chicken in the hot oil on both sides until golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes per side.
9. Pour 1/3 of the pasta sauce on the bottom of the prepared baking dish. Place the chicken on top and use 7 mozzarella slices to cover the chicken.
10. Pour the remaining sauce over the chicken and cheese. Sprinkle 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese on top. Tear the remaining mozzarella slice into pieces and scatter on top. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until bubbly.
11. While the chicken bakes, cook 8 ounces spaghetti or linguine in boiling salted water following package directions. Drain well.
12. Serve the chicken with the pasta, bread, and a tossed green salad.

How To Store Chicken Parmesan

Refrigerate leftover chicken parmesan in an airtight container for up to 5 days. Reheat in a 350 F oven, toaster oven, or air fryer, or microwave until heated through.