

# Chicken Fajitas

Prep: 12 mins

Cook: 10 mins

Total: 22 mins

Servings: 6 servings

These easy chicken fajitas are a classic combination of seasoned chicken strips, onions, and peppers. The homemade fajita seasoning adds a punch of not-too-spicy flavor, and dinner is ready in about 20 minutes.

You'll likely have most of the fajita seasonings in your pantry, and if you don't, they're all easy to find. Or you might choose to use a ready-made packet of fajita seasoning instead.

## The History of Fajitas

The word fajita didn't appear in print until the 1970s, but the dish dates back to the early 1900s.<sup>1</sup> Mexican vaqueros working in Texas probably made the first fajitas with grilled skirt steak.<sup>2</sup> Still, the dish didn't gain popularity until 1969, when Austin meat manager Sonny Falcon served them at his concession stand in Kyle, Texas.<sup>2</sup>

Later that same year, fajitas were introduced by Otilia Garza on the menu of his Round-Up Restaurant in Pharr, Texas<sup>2</sup>. The restaurant's fajitas were served on the signature sizzling platter with flour tortillas, cheese, and various condiments. As fajitas gained popularity, several variations popped up, including versions featuring chicken, shrimp, and vegetables.

## Make-Ahead Tips!

There are a few things you can do ahead to make your weeknight meal a little quicker and easier:

- Combine the spice mixture up to several days in advance. Cover and store the mixture in a cool, dark place until it's time to make the fajitas. This spice mix will also keep for several months in a sealed container.
- Slice the bell peppers and onions the day before and store them in a covered container in the refrigerator until it's time to cook them.
- The chicken can also be sliced and stored in a covered container in the fridge.

## What's the Difference Between Tacos and Fajitas?

A taco is a tortilla filled with meat or another protein along with toppings, while fajita refers to the meat—originally skirt steak—and the tortillas and garnishes are served on the side.

# What to Serve With Chicken Fajitas

Here are some of our favorite ways to serve chicken fajitas:

- For garnishes, serve the fajitas with diced tomatoes or pico de gallo, chopped cilantro, guacamole or sliced avocado, sour cream, pickled red onions, or sliced green onions.
- For sides, serve them with rice, refried beans, or a tossed salad. Fajitas go well with coleslaw as well or serve them with seasoned black beans or pinto beans.
- If you aren't a fan of flour tortillas or need a gluten-free option, serve the fajitas in gluten-free corn tortillas or taco shells.
- Make the fajitas a complete, well-balanced meal with cooked rice and refried beans on the side, or keep it light and simple with a tossed green salad.

## Ingredients

### For the Fajita Seasoning:

- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 3/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

### For the Fajitas and Assembly:

- 1 1/2 pounds boneless chicken breasts
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 3 medium bell peppers, multi-colored, sliced into thin strips
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 6 to 12 (6-inch) flour tortillas, warm, for serving
- Guacamole, sour cream, cheese, salsa, cilantro, or lime wedges, optional, for garnish

## Steps to Make It

1. Gather the ingredients.
2. In a small bowl, combine the chili powder, cumin, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, oregano, salt, and pepper. Mix to blend thoroughly.
3. Slice the chicken breasts into thin strips across the grain. Coat the chicken breast strips thoroughly with all of the seasoning mixture.
4. Heat the vegetable oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat.
5. Add the spice-coated chicken to the hot skillet. Sauté until cooked through and opaque, about 5 minutes.
6. Remove the chicken to a plate and set aside. Add the sliced onions and pepper strips to the skillet. Cook the vegetables, stirring frequently, for about 5 minutes, or until just tender.
7. Add the chicken strips back to the skillet, toss, and heat through.
8. Drizzle the fajitas with the lime juice and serve with warm tortillas and garnishes.

## Recipe Variations

- To make the fajitas with beef, slice 1 1/2 pounds of sirloin or skirt steak into 1/4-inch strips and toss with the seasoning. Follow the recipe instructions, cooking the beef strips for 5 to 8 minutes, or until done as desired.
- To make the fajitas with shrimp, toss one pound of large shrimp with the seasoning. Follow the recipe instructions, cooking the shrimp for about 4 minutes, or until opaque and pink.
- For vegetarian fajitas, replace the chicken with sliced portobello mushrooms and add black beans or pinto beans just before serving. Heat through, drizzle with the lime juice, and serve the fajitas in warm tortillas.
- If you don't have the various seasonings on hand, season the chicken with about 2 1/2 tablespoons of ready-made fajita seasoning. Note that many ready-made fajita seasoning mixes already contain salt, so adjust any additional salt you add accordingly.

## How to Store and Freeze

- If you have leftover fajitas, transfer the cooled fajita filling to a shallow covered container and refrigerate for up to four days.
- You may freeze fajita filling for longer storage. Put the fajitas in an airtight freezer container or zip-close freezer bag and freeze them for up to three months.
- Reheat defrosted fajitas in a lightly oiled skillet on the stovetop until hot.