

FOOD52

Chicken and Rice

By Mark Bittman

Editors' Comments:

One of the world's great one-pot dishes. Saffron (as you probably know if you're using it) is not cheap. Fortunately a little goes a long way. Don't be intimidated by cooking chicken and rice in the same pan. It's no harder than cooking either ingredient on its own. You may need to monitor the moisture in the pan toward the end of cooking, but as long as you resist the urge to uncover the skillet and stir, it will come out great. Short-grain rice is classic here, but if you like rice less sticky and more fluffy, use long-grain rice. You'll probably need to add the extra liquid in Step 3.

Makes 4 servings

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 whole cut-up chicken or about 3 pounds parts whole cut-up
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 medium onions
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 1/2 cup short-grain white rice
- 3 1/2 cups water, chicken stock, or vegetable stock, or more as needed
- 1 cup peas (frozen are fine; no need to thaw them)
- 2 limes, quartered, for serving

1. Put the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When it's hot, add the chicken, skin side down. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and cook, undisturbed but adjusting the heat so the chicken sizzles but doesn't burn, until the pieces release easily from the pan, 5 to 10 minutes. Then turn and rotate them every few minutes to brown them evenly. As the chicken pieces brown, after another 5 to 10 minutes, remove them from the pan.
2. Reduce the heat under the skillet to medium and pour or spoon off most of the oil so that only 2 tablespoons remain. Add the onions to the pan and cook, stirring frequently, until they soften, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the garlic and rice; cook, stirring, until the rice is glossy and coated with oil. Crumble in the saffron threads if you're using them.
3. Return the chicken to the pan, add the water, and stir gently to combine everything. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat so it bubbles gently but steadily. Cover the skillet and cook, undisturbed, for 20 minutes, then check the rice and chicken. The goal is to have the liquid absorbed, the rice tender, and the chicken cooked through. If the rice is dry but nothing is ready, add another 1/4 cup water and cook for another 5 to 10 minutes. The meat is done when a quick-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the thigh reads 155–165°F.

4. Remove the skillet from the heat. Taste the rice and adjust the seasoning. Add the peas, then cover the pan again and let it sit for 5 to 15 minutes. Fish the chicken out of the pan and transfer it to a serving platter. Fluff the rice with a fork, spoon it around the chicken, add the lime wedges, and serve.