

Oven "BBQ" Chicken

NOTE: We usually get chicken quarters for this meal, but you could easily use all thighs. The amount of coating is based on 2 quite large quarters, so adjust recipe accordingly if you have more (or less) chicken. You could also just use thighs.

Chicken

2 very large chicken quarters, cutting apart leg and thigh (or just use thighs). Skin on or off as you prefer, we took it off.

Coating

3 oz. white bread (3 slices depending on quality of the bread)

1/4 cup corn meal

3/4 tsp. garlic powder

3/4 tsp. onion powder

3/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

1/2 tsp. pimenton (smoked paprika)

1/2 tsp. cayenne (optional or more to taste)

Oil Spray (optional)

1 TB (more or less as needed) mayonnaise

TIPS: The mayonnaise can be any type. We use low fat. The idea is to use it as the glue that will make the coating stick. The spice amounts are completely to taste. We don't even measure them.

Optional, but it can make a huge difference: brine the chicken for 60 minutes in 2 quarts of water to which you have added 1/2 cup regular salt and 3 TB sugar. Depending on the size of the chicken and the size of the container you might get away with cutting these amounts in half.

Combine all the coating ingredients except for the mayonnaise in a food processor or blender and grind until you have a pretty fine mixture.

Dry the chicken pieces with paper towels then smear the mayonnaise all over them.

You could dredge the chicken pieces in the coating mixture but we like to put them one by one into a plastic bag that contains the coating and shake it around. Start by using 1/2 of the coating mixture then place the pieces on a rack and let sit for 5 minutes. If using, very lightly spritz the chicken with the oil spray then repeat the coating process with the remaining coating mixture. You can take any remaining coating and press it down onto the chicken. We like to put the chicken in the fridge on the rack placed over a plate. This helps set the coating but also lets us make it all ahead.

Pre-heat oven to 500 degrees. We have a heavy aluminum griddle that came with an oven that self destructed some years back. We put it in the oven during preheat to get it nice and hot.

Put the chicken in the oven. We put it directly on the hot aluminum griddle, but if you don't have one, cook it on a rack placed in a baking pan (so that there is air circulation around the chicken). Reduce heat to 435 degrees. Cooking time is, of course, highly dependent on your oven and the size of the chicken. In our oven we bake for 8 minutes then carefully remove our very hot baking pan and turn the chicken over and put back in the oven for another 8 minutes. An instant read thermometer is really a

great tool at this point. Cook the chicken until the internal temperature is 175 degrees. (Dark meat should be cooked longer than white meat. This allows the collagen to break down and makes it all the more juicy.) Let it sit for a few minutes then serve.

We have it with fries (made in a convection oven, which works as well if not better than an air fryer), cole slaw and garlic bread. And, don't forget the BBQ sauce!

Convection Fries, you say?

Not like there is any rocket science to this. A friend just obtained an air fryer and has been experimenting. Our first thought was to ask why he needed one since he had a really good full-sized convection oven. Though there may be uses for the air fryer, he found, in the end, that the oven was better most of the time. We have a table-top convection oven and it works great.

In essence, cut up potatoes and put them in the convection oven.

Now, here's what we do for two hungry people:

- 1 lb russet potatoes
- olive oil
- cayenne
- pimenton (smoked paprika)
- garlic powder
- onion powder
- salt

Preheat convection oven .All ovens are different and you have to figure for yourself what works best. We use 425 degrees.

Peel the potatoes and cut into fries. We prefer ones that are on the thinner side, but thick is fine as well. Place in a bowl, add the the oil and spices, and toss together. How much? Whatever you like. We use just a little oil and shake in the spices. You just want enough oil to lightly coat the potatoes. We like hot so we are heavy handed with the cayenne.

Lay the fries on the oven rack. It works best when they are not crowded. If we use two racks we switch them top to bottom half way through cooking. Cook until browned. It usually takes us about 20-25 minutes.

Salt the fries and eat immediately.

Don't have a convection oven? The 'fry' shape never worked out well for us in a regular oven. However, potatoes cut crosswise, relatively thin like thick chips, were a decent substitute in a regular oven.