

Creamy Skillet Chicken with Peppers and Spinach

Serves 4 - 6

This creamy and rich skillet chicken dinner is what pan sauce dreams are made of! The red peppers and spinach offer a healthy serving of veggies and a bright pop of color to the plate. Serve this easy skillet chicken over a bed of orzo pilaf for a satisfying supper.

Ingredients:

6 thinly-cut chicken breasts (or 3 breasts butterflied and then cut in half)
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons shallots, finely minced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 red pepper, thinly sliced

1/4 cup dry white wine
1 cup chicken stock
1 cup whipping cream
3 ounces fresh spinach

Orzo Pilaf

2 tablespoons shallot, minced
1/2 small onion, minced
2 tablespoons butter
1-1/2 cup orzo
1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt
3 cups chicken broth
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

Directions:

1. In a large Dutch oven, warm the olive oil over medium heat. If you are using whole chicken breasts, butterfly and then cut them in half to make thinly-cut pieces. Or skip this step and purchase thin chicken breast cutlets.
2. In a shallow bowl, mix the flour, salt, pepper, and cayenne. Dredge each chicken breast in the flour mixture until lightly coated. Add additional pepper after dredging, if desired.
3. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of the butter and 2 tablespoons of olive oil and allow to melt and heat.
4. Place the coated chicken breasts in the hot skillet. Allow the chicken to cook on the first side until golden. Turn, and cook the second side until also golden brown and the chicken is cooked through. Cook the chicken until the internal temperature reaches 165°F. The thinly-cut pieces should cook fairly quickly. Cook the chicken breasts in batches, as needed depending on the skillet's size.
5. Place the finished chicken on a heat tolerant plate, and place in a 200°F oven to keep warm while the remaining cutlets are sautéing and while the sauce is made.
6. Mince the shallot and garlic, and slice the red pepper. In the same skillet used for cooking the chicken breasts, sauté the shallots for 1 minute. Add additional olive oil for sautéing the shallots, if needed. Add the red pepper and cook until they are softened. Add the garlic and sauté an additional minute, or until the garlic is fragrant.
7. Deglaze the pan by adding the white wine to the skillet. Stir and scrape up the browned bits, also known as fond. The fond will add flavor to the sauce. Add the chicken stock and cream and reduce the heat to a simmer. Allow the juices to reduce by half or until the sauce has thickened.
8. Add the spinach and stir until just wilted.
9. Plate the warm chicken breasts and ladle the sauce on top. Serve with a side of orzo pilaf, potatoes, or roasted broccoli.

Orzo Pilaf

1. In a saucepan over medium-high heat, sauté the shallot and onion in butter until translucent.
2. Add the orzo and salt. Stir and heat for a few minutes, then add the chicken broth.
3. Bring to a simmer, then turn to low and cover for 13-15 minutes or until the orzo is cooked to *al dente*. If needed, remove the lid and continue to stir until all excess liquid is absorbed.
4. Stir in the Parmesan cheese and serve hot.