

SOUTHEAST ASIAN CHICKEN WITH PEPPER-LIME DIP

ONE OF MY FAVORITE WILLIAMS-SONOMA COOKBOOKS IS *SAVORING SOUTHEAST ASIA BY JOYCE JUE*. THIS RECIPE IS VERY SIMILAR TO THEIR RECIPE FOR MOUAN ANG. THE DIRECTIONS I HAVE BELOW IS TO SEAR THE CHICKEN IN A GRILL PAN ON THE STOVE, WEIGHTED WITH A CAST-IRON PAN, THEN BAKE TO COMPLETE THE COOKING PROCESS. IN THE FUTURE I WILL UPDATE THIS RECIPE TO INCLUDE GRILLING INSTRUCTIONS.

One 4 lb. Chicken, flattened (directions below) or split a whole chicken into two halves
1 Tbls. plus 2 tsp. Black Peppercorns or fresh ground using a coarse setting, separated
3 tsp. Salt, preferably a coarse type such as Maldon Salt Flakes or coarse Kosher Salt, separated
5 cloves (about 3 Tbls.) Garlic, chopped
3 Tbls. Low-sodium Soy Sauce
1 Tbls. Fish Sauce
1 Tbls. Turbinado Sugar (regular sugar can be used also)
3 Tbls. Vegetable Oil, separated
Fresh Coriander, coarsely chopped
2 Limes

FLATTEN CHICKEN: Using sharp kitchen scissors, cut a whole chicken along one side of the spine. The spine can be removed by cutting along the other side but I prefer to leave the spine on (I like to pick at the meat along the bone). Turn the chicken skin side down. Using a sharp knife, make a small cut along the top of the breastbone. This step is not necessary but it helps to get the chicken nice and flat. Flip the chicken bone side down. Using the palm of your hand, press down on the breast area of the chicken so it flattens. You can leave the wings so they fall between the breast and thigh or twist the wing tip up over the first joint. Flipping the wing tip up will pull the wing to the top area of the breast and allow the breast and thigh area to brown and cook more evenly. Alternately, you can slice through the breastbone to split the chicken into two halves.

MARINATE: Using a mortar and pestle, grind 2 tsp. black peppercorns (or coarsely ground black pepper) and 2 tsp. coarse salt. Add garlic and grind together (it will be almost paste-like). Put mixture into a bowl. Add soy sauce, fish sauce, Turbinado sugar, and 1 Tbls. oil. Stir mixture until sugar is dissolved.

Place the flattened chicken into a platter. Cover both sides with marinade. For added flavor, lift the skin at the top of the breast (there will be 2 pockets, one for each side of the breast) and spoon in 1 tsp. of marinade into each breast pocket between skin and meat. Using your fingers or a butter knife, rub marinade down so it spreads evenly. At the butt end of the chicken you can lift the skin gently at the top of the thigh and spoon in 1 tsp. of marinade into each thigh pocket. Rub the marinade down so it is spread evenly. Place the chicken in refrigerator to marinate for 4 hours to overnight.

COOKING: Preheat the oven to 325°. Place a cast-iron pan in the oven to heat. Alternately you can place it on the stove at medium heat. Heat a grill pan on medium-high heat. Add 2 Tbls. oil to pan, swirling it around to coat evenly. Place the chicken, skin side down, onto pan. Cover with a sheet of aluminum foil then place hot cast-iron pan on top. If you would like additional weight fill a kettle with water, bring it to a boil and place the full hot kettle on top (note: if the kettle is cold it will cool the temperature of the cast-iron pan). Lower the heat to medium to medium-low and cook for 10 minutes. You want the skin to sear but not burn.

Remove the kettle, cast-iron pan, and foil. Place the chicken skin side up into a baking pan. Place foil and cast iron pan back on top of chicken (I did not use the kettle for this step) and place the pan in the oven. Cook for 10-15 minutes.

While the chicken is baking, place the limes, cut side down on the grill pan and cook at medium-low heat for 5 minutes.

Remove chicken from oven and let it sit for 5 minutes before serving.

SERVING: Chicken can be carved as desired. Sprinkle coriander on top of chicken. In a small bowl, squeeze the juice out of the limes, add 1 tsp. salt and 1 Tbls. black pepper, and stir well. Optional: You can add 1 tsp. chopped coriander to the dip. The pepper-lime sauce should be served on the side as a dipping sauce.

Recipe from Hestina's Kardia Blog – www.hestinaskardia.com