Sweet Fire Chicken

A low point copycat recipe of the Panda Express entree

My favorite entree at Panda is Sweet Fire Chicken. It's similar to their crispy orange chicken, except instead of orange, it's a pineapple glaze, with chunks of pineapple, onions, red chilis, and red and green bell peppers. It's sweet, spicy and saucy, just like me. In order to “skinny” the dish, I decided rather than deep frying the chicken, we're breading and baking the chicken, till crispy.

Servings Info.: Points:  
Yields: 9 cups 1 serving = 3 1 1  
Servings: 6 2 servings = 5 2 2  
Serving Size: 1.5 cups 3 servings = 8 4 4  
4 servings = 10 5 5

Ingredients:

Chicken:
- 1.5 pounds boneless skinless chicken breast, or chicken breast tenderloins, cut into bite sized chunks.
- 1 batch of my “low point breading 2.0” recipe. It can be found in my “Cookbook: Volume 1,” on pg. 35.

Sweet & Spicy Pineapple Sauce & Glaze:
- 1/2 cup pineapple juice (see additional ingredients).
- 3 Tbsp reduced sodium soy sauce
- 4 Tbsp 0 point sweetener of choice
- 2 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp ginger root, finely chopped/minced
- 3/4 to 1 tsp red pepper flakes (or more, to taste).
- 1-1/2 tsp cornstarch, dissolved in 2 Tbsp water.
- 1 Tbsp sugar free syrup (pancake syrup)
- 1/4 tsp black pepper

Additional Ingredients:
- 1 jumbo onion
- 1 large red bell pepper (or 2 medium)
- 1 large green bell pepper (or 2 medium)
- 20oz canned pineapple chunks, in pineapple juice. Drain and rinse the pineapple, RESERVE THE JUICE.
- 1 tsp sesame seeds, toasted, for garnish.
- 1 green onion, thin sliced at an angle, for garnish.

Directions:

1. Mix all of the Sauce ingredients together in a bowl, till well combined. Set aside.

2. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a large pan with foil, then spray with cooking spray. Set aside.

3. (A) Cut chicken into bite sized chunks. (B) Dip pieces in egg mixture, making sure to allow extra egg to drip off of the chicken. You just want the pieces to be lightly covered. (C) Place dipped chicken, ONE PIECE AT A TIME, into the breading and lightly coat. Do not attempt to dump it all in a bag, like shake n’ bake, you’ll end up with a bag of mush. Bread these one at a time. Set breaded chicken onto pan, repeat. (D) Spray breaded chicken with cooking spray. Bake 14 minutes, then remove from oven. Flip the chicken pieces over, then bake 5 more minutes. Done.
4. Heat the sesame seeds in a small pan, over medium heat, till lightly browned and toasted. 2-3 minutes.

5. (A) Heat a large pan for 1 minute over medium heat. Spray with cooking spray, then add the chopped bell peppers and onion. Season with salt and pepper. Crank the heat up to High, then cook for 4 minutes. (B) After 4 minutes on High, add the sauce and pineapple to the pan and toss to combine. Continue cooking for 4 more minutes at high heat, allowing the sauce to bubble and thicken. (C) Gently fold in and toss the baked chicken pieces. (D) Gently toss/fold until well combined. Done. Garnish with sliced green onion and toasted sesame seeds.

NOTES & SUGGESTIONS:
- **BREADING:** If you are on the Green plan, you can reduce the points of my breading by using egg whites, rather than whole eggs for the egg wash.
  * I strongly advise you NOT to try dumping all of the breading and chicken into a ziplock bag, then shake it all up. It does NOT work. It takes time, but you need to bread the chicken one piece at a time. It took me around 12 minutes.
  * You can use an air fryer instead of an oven, it actually makes the chicken even crispier. Depending on your air fryer model, you may not have to flip the chicken.
- **CRISPINESS:** Though this is a good, healthy alternative to restaurant-style deep fried chicken breast pieces, the breading on this chicken WILL lose its crispness after being coated with the sauce for a few minutes. Just like chicken Parmesan. Once your breaded chicken begins to absorb the sauce, it will eventually lose its crunchy exterior. For this dish, toss the chicken into the hot sauce and vegetables right before serving, to ensure the crisp texture lasts as long as possible.
- **SPICINESS:** Feel free to add more red pepper flakes, or even to toss in some dried Asian chili, to make this dish as spicy as you’d like. Your goal is for a sweet and spicy sauce.
- **SESAME SEEDS:** A reminder for folks who aren’t familiar with the database difference. In the WW database, 1 tsp of sesame seeds is 1 point, however, 1 tsp of TOASTED sesame seeds is 0 points. Hence, why whenever my recipes use sesame seeds for garnish, they are always toasted.
- **POINTS:** The regular “Sweet Fire Chicken Breast” entree at Panda Express is 13 points per serving. Once you figure out the basics of hacking recipes using the builder... it will make your head spin. You can make a healthier, low point version of almost anything you miss eating.