



ORANGE CHICKEN

My Sweet, Savory and AWESOME Take On Traditional Orange Chicken

Like most of the human race, I love Panda's orange chicken, but what I don't love is that it's such a 1-note entree. Other than sweet, the dish has no nuance. Where most bloggers are happy to simply make a copycat Panda Express version, I wanted to make a low calorie/fat version, based off of an actual Chinese restaurant's recipe. With orange peel, fresh ginger, & chili garlic sauce, mine's got flavor and depth without the calories.

Servings Info.:

Yields: 4 cups
 Servings: 4
 Serving Size: 1 cup



*- last checked 11/27/22 -
 Use your mobile device's 'Camera' App to
 look at this code for nutritional info.*

Ingredients:

Chicken:

- 1-1/4 pounds boneless skinless chicken breast, or chicken breast tenderloins, cut into bite sized chunks.
- 1/4 tsp baking soda, dissolved with 2 tsp water
- 1 batch of my 'low point breading', recipe on pg. 118.

Orange Sauce & Glaze:

- 1/3 cup orange juice, some pulp.
- 7 Tbsp cup water (1 less Tbsp than 1/2 cup)
- 1-1/2 tsp cornstarch, dissolved into the water
- 2 Tbsp PLUS 2 tsp reduced sodium soy sauce
- 1-1/4 tsp 'dark' soy sauce
- 1/4 cup 0 calorie sugar replacement (I used lakanto)
- 3 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tbsp orange zest/peel, finely chopped (Yes... go buy an orange, Nancy.)
- 1 tsp fresh ginger, finely chopped/minced
- 2 tsp Asian chili sauce (I used Huy Fong chili garlic sauce)
- 1 Tbsp PLUS 1 tsp sugar free syrup (pancake syrup)
- 1/4 tsp black pepper

Additional Ingredients:

- 1 tsp sesame seeds, toasted, for garnish.

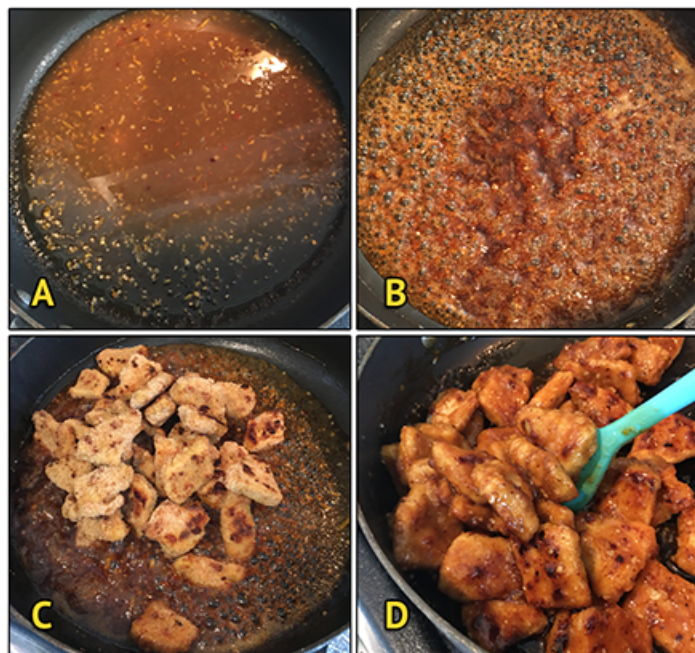
Directions:

1. Marinate the chicken pieces with the baking soda solution for 20 to 30 minutes.
2. Gather all the ingredients to make a batch of my toasted breading recipe.



3. **(A)** Heat a pan over medium heat for 1 minute, then add all breading ingredients. Toast for 3-4 minutes, or until the crumbs are a nice, uniformly golden color. Remove from pan and set aside, letting the crumbs cool to room temperature. **(B)** Place the whisked eggs into the bowl with the chicken pieces, mix to combine. **(C)** Place the toasted crumbs in a bowl, then place the chicken chunks, ONE AT A TIME, into the crumbs. Use a fork to lightly coat each chunk with the breading. **(D)** Place the lightly breaded chicken pieces onto 2 large baking pans, covered with foil and sprayed with a light coat of cooking spray. **(E)** Pre-Heat oven to 400 degrees.

4. Bake the chicken for 12 minutes. Remove from oven, flip the pieces, then bake for 4-5 more minutes. Remove from oven, set aside as you make the sauce.



5. (A) Heat a large pan for 1 minute over medium heat, then pour the sauce into the pan. (B) Crank up the heat to medium-high and bring the sauce to a rolling boil for 1 minute, or until it begins to thicken. Stir with a cooking utensil to ensure it doesn't burn. (C) Once the sauce thickens to the consistency of maple syrup (it'll take a few minutes of boiling), add all of the baked chicken breast pieces to the pan. (D) Gently toss and stir the chicken around the pan, till well coated in a thickened glaze. Garnish with sesame seeds and SERVE IMMEDIATELY! Seriously, I'm not just saying that. The breading will start to absorb the sauce and it'll begin to lose its crunch in about 5 minutes. This is baked, not deep fried.

NOTES & SUGGESTIONS:

- **BREADING:** 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.
- **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 breading begins to absorb the sauce, it will eventually lose its crunchy exterior. For this dish, toss the chicken into the hot sauce right before serving, to ensure the crisp texture lasts for as long as possible.
- **BREAD CRUMBS INSTEAD OF RICE KRISPIES:** If you have access to 1 point per slice bread, instead of using my 'breading 2.0' recipe, for the crumbs... you can make a batch of my low point bread crumbs, from pg. 16. It makes enough real breadcrumbs to double-bread all the chicken for the same points. You'll just need an extra egg or two for the egg wash. But, the chicken will be CRAZY crunchy.
- **VEGGIES:** This only makes 4 cups of breaded and glazed orange chicken. That's fine, but I'd highly recommend plating it with steamed or sauteed veggies, to 'stretch it out'. I steamed a 1-1/2 lb bag of broccoli florets and served it all as a large, restaurant style platter, which increases the number of servings you can get out of the recipe, as well as the size of the servings. Besides, unlike Panda, where you get a giant scoop of this stuff on its own, when you order orange chicken at a restaurant it's ALWAYS served on a big bed of steamed broccoli.
- **POINTS:** The regular "Orange Chicken" entree at Panda Express is 18 points for one serving. My version is 2 points on both the 'Regular' and the 'Diabetic' plans. Let this be yet another example of how you can eat absolutely ANYTHING on-plan, without any regret. It just requires cooking a little differently than you used to.

