

INDOOR BBQ CHICKEN

SERVES 4

START TO FINISH: 30 minutes **7/25/17**

Although we far prefer the flavor of our own sauce, you can substitute 2 cups of your favorite bottled barbecue sauce for the ketchup and flavorings in step 3. Be sure to use a nonstick skillet to prevent the sweet sauce from sticking to the pan.

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (6 to 8 ounces each), trimmed**
- Salt and pepper**
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- 1 onion, minced**
- 1 cup ketchup**
- 3 tablespoons light molasses**
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar**
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire**
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard**
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup**
- 1 teaspoon chili powder**
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper**

- 1.** Pound the thicker ends of the chicken as needed, following the photo on page 340. Pat dry with paper towels, then season with salt and pepper.
- 2.** Heat the oil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add the chicken and cook until light golden brown on both sides, about 4 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a plate.
- 3.** Add the onion and ¼ teaspoon salt to the skillet and return to medium heat until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the ketchup, molasses, vinegar, Worcestershire, mustard, maple syrup, chili powder, and cayenne pepper, scraping up any browned bits.
- 4.** Turn the heat to low. Return the chicken to the skillet, with any accumulated chicken juices, and coat with the sauce. Cover and simmer until the chicken is fully cooked and registers 160 degrees on an instant-read thermometer, about 10 minutes.

Fest Kitchen Tip: STOVETOP IS BEST

Barbecued chicken is an outdoor family favorite that is often disappointing when cooked indoors in the oven. After testing lots of oven-baked barbecued chicken with flabby skin and greasy sauce, we decided to lose the skin, lose the bones, and lose the oven. Using boneless, skinless chicken breasts eliminated lots of problems and made for a very easy recipe. And by cooking the entire dish in a nonstick skillet on the stovetop, we were able to first brown the chicken, then build a flavorful barbecue sauce using the pan drippings. Finally, simmering the chicken in the sauce gave it serious BBQ flavor.

Should You Rinse Your Chicken?

Some people rinse chicken before cooking, others don't. Does it matter? It does according to the U.S.D.A., as well as to food agencies in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. They all recommend not rinsing. They warn that rinsing the chicken won't remove or kill much bacteria, but the splashing of water around the sink area can actually spread the bacteria around the kitchen. To find out if rinsing had any impact on flavor, we roasted four chickens—two rinsed, two unrinsed—and held a blind tasting. Tasters' comments and preferences were all over the place, leading us to believe that differences in flavor had more to do with the chicken itself than with rinsing. Our conclusion? Skip the rinse, but use the sink as a prep area (to remove any plastic wrapping and so on) because it's easier to wash and sanitize than the counter.