

Sweet and Tangy Russian Apricot Chicken - My Way

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6 to 8 bone-in chicken thighs
Kosher salt, freshly cracked black pepper and Cajun seasoning or cayenne pepper, *to taste*
1 (16 ounce) bottle red Russian dressing
1 (10 ounce) jar apricot preserves
3 tablespoons dried onion flakes
1 tablespoon beef base (like Better than Bouillon), or granulated bouillon
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
1/4 teaspoon seasoned salt
Hot, cooked rice

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line a baking pan with aluminum foil for easier clean-up. Season chicken on both sides with salt, pepper and Cajun seasoning and place into the baking dish. Whisk together the dressing, preserves and remaining ingredients (except rice). Pour half of the dressing over the top, turn chicken to coat all sides and return skin side up. Pour remaining dressing mixture on top.

Bake uncovered at 350 degrees F for 1 hour to 1-1/4 hours until chicken is cooked through and registers 170 to 175 degrees F on an instant read thermometer when inserted into the thickest part of the thigh. Total time will depend on the size of the thighs. Skim off excess fat from drippings and spoon sauce over individual servings of chicken. Serve the chicken over hot, cooked rice, skim off excess fat from the top of the drippings and spoon sauce over the top and add a green veggie or salad on the side.

Cook's Notes: May substitute one packet of onion soup mix for the onions flakes through seasoned salt. Any Catalina style or red-based French style dressing may be used, as well as peach preserves, pepper jelly, pineapple preserves or your favorite jam. May also substitute a small can of cranberry sauce for the preserves. Okay to substitute a whole cut up chicken or other bone-in cuts of chicken, adjusting time as needed. Remove skin from chicken, if desired, to reduce accumulated fat. Remove chicken and shred it, and return to the skimmed sauce to use as pulled chicken on sandwiches and tacos.

Slow Cooker: Remove skin from chicken, if desired, to reduce accumulated fat in the crockpot. Season chicken on both sides with pepper and Cajun seasoning or cayenne. Place skin side down in the cooker. Pour the dressing mixture around and over the chicken, turn to coat, cover and cook on high for 3 to 4 hours, or low for 6 to 8 hours. Actual time will be dependent on cut and size of chicken used; boneless, skinless chicken breasts will be done in a much shorter time.

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