

ORANGE CHICKEN

Prepared by: Beth & Ryan McElwain

Source: Cook's Illustrated

MARINADE AND SAUCE

¼ cup low sodium chicken broth

8 2-inch strips of orange zest plus 1 ½ teaspoons grated zest and ¾ cup orange juice (all from 2 large oranges)

6 tablespoons white vinegar

¼ cup soy sauce (I used low-sodium)

½ cup packed brown sugar

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 tablespoon fresh grated ginger

¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper (I used less than this and it was the perfect spice for our family)

½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed and cut into 1 ½-inch pieces

1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons corn starch

2 tablespoons cold water

8 small whole dried ancho red chiles (we did not do this; I think it would make the dish really spicy)

COATING AND FRYING OIL

3 large egg whites

1 cup cornstarch

¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

½ teaspoon baking soda

3 cups peanut oil

FOR THE MARINADE AND SAUCE

Whisk broth, grated orange zest, orange juice, vinegar, soy sauce, sugar, garlic, ginger and cayenne together in a large sauce pan. Transfer ¾ cup mixture to medium bowl, add chicken to marinade to bowl. Let marinate for 10 min to 1 hour.

Whisk cold water and corn starch together in small bowl. Bring broth mixture in sauce pan to simmer over high heat. Whisk in cornstarch mixture, bring to simmer and cook stirring occasionally, until thick and translucent and measures 1 ½ cups, about 1 minute. Off heat, stir in orange peel and chiles (if using). Set aside.

FOR THE COATING

Set wire rack in rimmed baking sheet. Lightly beat egg whites in a shallow dish or pie plate until frothy. Combine cornstarch, cayenne and baking soda in a second dish. Drain chicken and pat dry with paper towels. Place half of chicken pieces in egg whites and turn to coat. Transfer pieces to cornstarch mixture and coat thoroughly. Place dredged chicken pieces on prepared wire rack; repeat with remaining chicken.

TO FRY CHICKEN

Heat oil in Dutch Oven (I used a medium sauce pan). Heat until it registers 350 degrees. Carefully place half of the chicken in oil, 1 piece at a time, and fry until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Turn each piece

with tongs, half way through frying and adjusting heat as necessary to maintain 350 degrees. Transfer chicken to large paper towel-lined plate. Return oil to 350 degrees (if necessary) over high heat and repeat with remaining chicken.

TO SERVE

Reheat sauce over medium heat and until simmering, about 2 minutes. Add chicken and gently toss until evenly coated and heated through. Serve immediately.

Beth & Ryan's Notes:

- 1. The fresh fried chicken was amazing but time consuming if increasing recipe for large group. We had to do small batches of chicken to keep oil temp up. We held chicken in warm oven until all was fried.*
- 2. For the Ronald McDonald house, we used frozen popcorn chicken and baked in oven. Tossed in sauce. This was very good, but not as good as the fresh fried.*

