



I love Greek food. The one exception is grilled octopus, but we're here to talk about chicken, not octopus! This is one of my favorite summer meals because it can be served three ways, and with just a very few ingredients, you get a burst of flavor in every single bite: salty olives, tangy feta, bright lemon, sweet tomatoes, juicy chicken. It all works! Try it!

Greek Chicken

Greek Chicken features some of my favorite Mediterranean ingredients – lemons, olives, feta, and fresh oregano (which grows abundantly in my garden). This recipe is incredibly versatile. The chicken marinates quickly and can be oven-baked or grilled.

It can be served in a pita pocket, as a kabob salad, or as a stand-alone entrée. The cucumber sauce (a take on traditional Tzatziki) is a perfect complement to the chicken, plus it's a great dip for pita chips and veggies. This dish is light, healthy, fast, and best of all, delicious. Give it a try! Serves 3 to 4.

Ingredients

3 boneless skinless chicken breasts

2 lemons

5 cloves of garlic (4 for chicken, 1 for cucumber sauce)

2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil

1 Tablespoon freshly chopped oregano (or ½ Tablespoon dried oregano)

1 English cucumber

½ cup plain Greek yogurt

1 fresh tomato, diced

1 cup pitted kalamata olives

1 cup feta cheese, cubed

Salt

Optional ingredients: Pita pockets, lettuce, depending on how you wish to serve

For the Cucumber Sauce:

Peel the cucumber, cut in half lengthwise, and use a spoon to scoop out any seeds. Chop the cucumber into small cubes (1 cup), sprinkle lightly with salt, and let it sit in a strainer for 30 minutes to allow extra liquid to drain. You could also let it sit on paper towels.

Mix the cubed cucumber with ½ cup yogurt, 1 minced clove of garlic, and 1 Tablespoon of lemon juice. I use a microplane to mince the garlic so that it gets evenly blended into the yogurt. Taste the mixture for salt, garlic and lemon, and adjust to your preferred taste. Put the sauce in an airtight container and chill until you're ready to serve. Garnish with a sprinkle of oregano, if you wish.

For the Chicken:

First, make the marinade. Combine 3 Tablespoons of lemon juice (please use real lemons), 2 teaspoons of extra virgin olive oil, oregano, 4 cloves of minced garlic, and ½ teaspoon of salt. If you use a microplane for the garlic, the marinade will take on a paste-like consistency. If you don't use a microplane, mince the garlic very finely. The marinade can be made ahead of time. Keep refrigerated until ready to use.

30 minutes before you are ready to bake or grill, prep the chicken by cutting each breast in half, across the middle, so that you have 6 chunky pieces. Put the chicken chunks in a bowl or plastic bag, pour on the marinade, and mix so that all of the chicken gets coated in the mixture.

Important: The chicken marinates for only 30 minutes! Don't let it go longer, because the lemon juice will "cook" the chicken and change its texture. So – 30 minutes! That's it!

Bake the chicken in a 375 degree oven for 20-25 minutes or until you achieve an **internal temperature of 165 degrees F**. Ovens vary, so aim for internal temperature, not time. Do not serve undercooked chicken! Also, please note that I use convection heat which speeds up the cooking process. If you are grilling, again, cook the chicken to a temperature of 165 degrees F. When the chicken reaches temperature, remove from stove/grill, cover lightly with foil and let it rest on the counter for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, dice the tomato and cut the feta into small cubes. The pitted kalamata olives can be served whole or cut in half.

After resting for 10 minutes, cut the chicken into chunks (for kabob salad or pita sandwich), or leave whole (for entrée).

For pitas, put the chicken into the pocket, top with the cucumber sauce, tomato, olive and feta. For salads, serve the chicken on top of lettuce, spoon cucumber sauce onto the chicken, add the tomatoes, olives and feta. You could also add fresh cucumber chunks and pepperoncini to the salad. As an entrée, simply serve the chicken with cucumber sauce, and top with tomato, olives, and feta.

Pour a nice glass of crisp, dry white wine, and enjoy!

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