

Brackish Newsletter

March 15, 2018

Recipe Ideas

The \$20 Chicken Dinner: How-To



Richard made this grilled chicken on Sunday night that was *amazing*. I don't love chicken and I really don't like leftover chicken, but I could eat this stuff every day.

The best part? *All ingredients* cost \$20, and it provides 6 (SIX!) meals. It's the epitome of healthy, productive meal-prep that is cheap and GOOD.

- Buy boneless skinless breasts (I bought 4 for \$5.45), cilantro, 2 limes, 1 lemon, 1 carton of Greek yogurt, garlic, 1 avocado, 1 bunch of kale, 1 head of cabbage, 1 lb of green beans, and 3 sweet potatoes. It sounds like a lot but it's really not.
- Marinade chicken in lime juice, 3 diced garlic cloves, and ½ cup chopped cilantro in EVOO for at least 1 hour (you can prep this the night before if you're feeling extra productive.) While chicken is marinating, bake sweet potatoes at 400 for 1 hour.

- Grill chicken for 4-5 mins/side or until done. Charcoal does amazing things for chicken, but use whatever you have.
- Meanwhile, wash and chop kale + cabbage and sauté slightly for about 3-4 minutes – just until warm. Remove to bowl and squeeze ½ lemon over top. Next, mash avocado with Greek yogurt and squeeze other half of lemon. Stir and set aside.
- Trim ends off beans and sauté in olive oil for 4-5 minutes until slightly crisp, add a splash of chicken stock, cover and cook for 6-7 more minutes until tender. Turn off and hit with salt + pepper until ready to serve.
- When chicken is finished, assemble plates with ½ sweet potato per person, ½ chicken breast, a serving of beans, and all the warm kale + cabbage salad you want. Top with avocado crema and voila!



Service Highlight: NourishNC

Last week I packed food at NourishNC, whose purpose is to provide good food to kids in Wilmington who are homeless or otherwise rely on school lunches. During breaks (weekends, spring break, etc.), these kids can go days without a meal. I work with several kids at the Brigade who benefit from this organization and who often come to tutoring at 3:00pm without having eaten that day. It's a direct-service model (which I like – parents and kids come to the warehouse and pick up their food) and the operators are young folks who have figured out how to fill a basic need. And my favorite part is that NNC provides recipes with the food so kids/parents learn to cook together. They also have their financials listed on their website, so you are welcome to see where your donations go.

Richard's Tip of the Week

Leave a stick of butter out *at all times*. Room temperature butter tastes better and is much easier to spread than cold butter.

More Recipes

Quesadillas



I love quesadillas. But I have learned there is an art to making a *great* quesadilla, which is heat – lots and lots of heat. Beyond that, the tortilla is your template, and you can add anything you want. I love to cook (or use leftover!) chicken, shred it in the cast iron, add a little taco seasoning and water, and cook until juicy and simmering.

Then, I crisp 1 side of each tortilla in the skillet and layer with my toppings. Make SURE to put cheese on both sides – this is critical. So for example: cheese, chicken, sautéed mushrooms and onions, green onions (these are awesome), sweet pickled jalapenos, spinach, and more cheese. Place the 2nd tortilla on top and cook on low until cheese is COMPLETELY melted. I like to cook the tortillas in the skillet and transfer the whole pan to the oven at 400 for about 5-6 minutes until it's totally heated through. Then you take them out, cut into triangles, and eat immediately with copious amounts of sour cream (and a green vegetable, if you like.)

Best Things to Buy at TJ's

I don't shop at Trader Joe's all the time, but there are some things I love to buy. I took a poll and these are some of the best deals and values:

- **Peanut butter** – it's \$1.99 for a 16oz jar, and has no sugar. They have crunchy and smooth and it's GOOD. Their almond and mixed nut butters are also great and cheap.

What is a spatchcock chicken?

Spatchcocking sounds scary but it's easy and magical. Spatchcocking is a technique of flattening a whole roast chicken by removing the backbone before cooking (use your shears!), which allows the entire bird to cook evenly in about 45 mins (instead of 1.5 hrs for a regular roast.) The chronic problem with roast chicken is that the breasts cook fast and are dry, while the dark meat is raw and juicy. Spatchcocking solves both!

- **Sweet pickled jalapenos** – just trust me here and buy them.
- **Wine** – no brainer here due to the price and quality. The La Granja red, Spanish Syrah, and Malbec's are some of my favorites.
- **Pita chips** - \$1.99 and taste like Stacey's which cost \$5.99.
- **Spanish EVOO** – really good, really good price. It's \$8.99 for a large jug.
- **Flowers** – last week they had 10 tulips for \$4.99. Buy someone a bouquet just because!

Things I've Made Lately

Sheet Pan Fajitas – so good, so easy, great leftovers.

Irish Soda Bread – in honor of St. Patty's Day, this is a great first-time bread. I cut the sugar and skip the raisins to make a more savory bread, but feel free to alter any way you like!



Pineapple Rice – this is a *great* recipe to serve with fish/shrimp/chicken. I made with shrimp this week and it takes rice to a whole new level!

Basil Parmesan Shrimp – I cooked this in the skillet instead of in the oven, but it turned out great.

Roasted Carrots – I'm not a huge fan of cooked carrots, but these are a great alternative starch that I love. The key is to not overcook them so they still have a little bite.