

SPICY CHICKEN PICCATA

Serves 2 • 30 mins

Ingredients

2 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 1-1 1/4 pounds)

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

5 garlic cloves

2 tablespoons neutral oil, such as grapeseed or canola, plus more

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided

2 tablespoons capers, drained

1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, plus more

1 lemon, very thinly sliced, seeds removed

1 cup dry white wine, such as pinot grigio

1/2 cup parsley, tender leaves and stems, coarsely chopped or torn

Instructions

- 1 Working your way from the thickest part to the thinnest part, slice each chicken breast in half crosswise (like you're going to butterfly it, splayed open like a book). Each breast should give you two thin pieces rather than two thick chunks. This is hard to describe, but you get it.
- 2 Place each thin piece between a folded piece of parchment paper (you can also use plastic wrap) and using a meat pounder (if you've got it), a small heavy skillet, or perhaps even a rolling pin, pound each breast, aiming for an even thickness (do your best), about 1/8" thick. For this particular dish, I think it's better to err on the side of thicker rather than thinner (which could result in torn, shredded meat which we don't want here).
- 3 Season chicken with salt and pepper; set aside. Thinly slice four cloves of garlic and finely chop the remaining; set aside.
- 4 Heat two tablespoons of neutral oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until oil is shimmering (but not smoking), 1-2 minutes. Add two pieces of chicken to the skillet, pressing each piece gently with tongs or fish spatula to ensure good contact (which = good browning). Cook until deeply golden brown on one side, 2-4 minutes. Flip the chicken and cook for an additional 1-2 minutes. Transfer to a plate, and repeat with remaining chicken, adding additional neutral oil as needed.
- 5 Without wiping the skillet, add 2 tablespoons of butter, sliced garlic and capers. Using a wooden spoon, tongs or a fish spatula, do your best to scrape up the browned bits (more will come up when you add the wine). Cook, swirling occasionally, until garlic and capers are golden brown and crispy, about 2 minutes. Transfer half the garlic and capers to a small bowl; set aside.
- 6 Add 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, half the sliced lemon and all of the white wine. Bring to a simmer and cook until the liquid has thickened and reduced by about half, 4-6 minutes.
- 7 With the skillet off the heat, add the last tablespoon of butter, the rest of the sliced lemon, and the finely chopped garlic, swirling the skillet to melt the butter. Taste the sauce and give it a final season of salt, pepper and more crushed red pepper flakes if you like (it should be tangy, buttery, spicy and salty). Spoon this magic sauce over the chicken and scatter with reserved crispy garlic/capers, parsley and more crushed red pepper.
- 8 Spoon the sauce over the chicken and finish with parsley, olive oil, and the crispy garlic-caper mixture.