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Bacon Wrapped Chicken Breasts

(inspired by www.paleocupboard.com)

2 lb Boneless Skinless Chicken Breasts
1 lb Bacon
Garlic Salt
Freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 425. Prepare a baking dish by lightly coating with olive oil. Cut chicken breasts in half and generously sprinkle with Garlic Salt. Then wrap each piece of chicken with slices of bacon. Secure bacon with toothpicks if necessary. Sprinkle with ground black pepper. Bake for 45 mins until chicken is cooked and bacon is crispy.

Baby Kale Caesar Salad with Cheese Crisps

8 oz Package of pre-washed Baby Kale
4-6 Tbs Caesar Salad Dressing (I prefer Newman's Own Creamy Caesar)
6-8 oz grated Parmesan Cheese

Preheat oven to 425. Line a baking sheet with parchment or aluminum foil. Place grated Parmesan Cheese on the pan & bake for 8 mins. Remove from oven & let cool for a few minutes on the sheet until firm enough to move to a plate to cool completely.

Combine Baby Kale with salad dressing, adjusting amount to your taste. Top with the cheese crisps and serve! Delicious!

Wine Pairing Recommendation

Rosè all day!! Pick a wine that is very bright and fresh to pair with the smoky salty bacon and creamy dressing. We had one of our favorites - Le Charmel which was perfect. Whispering Angel would be another great option. Cheers!!



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Pork Carnitas in Lettuce Wraps

(SLOW COOKER VERSION)

- 1 3lb boneless pork shoulder (boston butt), trimmed
- 2 tsp Cumin, ground
- 1 tsp Chipotle Chili, ground
- 1/2 tsp Oregano, dried
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1/2 tsp Black Pepper, freshly ground
- 10 Garlic cloves, sliced in half
- 3/4 cup Orange Juice, preferably fresh
- 2 Tbs Lime Juice, preferably fresh
- 12-16 Lettuce leaves from about 1 head of Boston Bibb Lettuce (Butter Lettuce), rinsed and dried

Garnish per wrap:

- 1-2 Tbs Salsa (I used Newman's Own Tequila Lime - so yummy)
- 1/2 Tbs Greek Yogurt, Full Fat (Fagè is a favorite)
- 1 tsp fresh Cilantro, chopped
- Hot Sauce, to taste (I used Frank's and loved the vinegary bite)
- 1 lime wedge

Place pork shoulder in slow cooker (at least 4 qt). Combine cumin, chipotle, oregano, salt & pepper... and then rub all over the outside of the pork. Make slits in the pork all over the top and sides... Slip the garlic into the slits in the pork. Try to really push into the meat so that as it cooks.. it absorbs the garlic into the meat. Combine the orange and lime juices and then pour over the pork. Cover and cook for 8 hrs on low, or 6 hrs on high.

Remove pork from slow cooker. Shred using two forks. Add 3/4 to 1 cup cooking liquid to the pork and toss until well combined. Let cool slightly. Spoon pork mixture onto lettuce leaves. Top with garnishes. Wrap...and Enjoy!

Wine Pairing Recommendation

My original thought for this pairing was a nice light bodied Pinot Noir, lightly chilled... however as it turned out... I didn't have any of that in the house... Hahahha! So I grabbed a juicy red blend that was colder than would be normally recommended for drinking (thanks to my super cold garage...ugh winter in New England)... and it was fantastic! I chose a "go-to" for us - the Adobe Red by Clayhouse Wines. The berry and plum hints played well with the tomatoey salsa, and the black pepper backed wine paired perfectly with the spicy meat. Cheers!!



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Andouille, Shrimp and Chicken Jambalaya

2 Tbs Olive Oil, divided
1 lb Chicken Breasts, skinless & boneless, cut into 1" pieces
1 lb Chicken Thighs, skinless & boneless, cut into 1" pieces
1 large Onion, chopped
1 Green Pepper, chopped
4 stalks Celery, chopped
2 large Garlic Cloves, minced
3 fully cooked Andouille Sausage Links, cut into bite size pieces
2 Tbs Cajun Seasoning
1/2 tsp Thyme
1 tsp Smoked Paprika
1 - 28oz can San Marzano Tomatoes, diced
1 cup Chicken Broth
1 lb medium Shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 Tbs Hot Sauce

Garnish:

Parsley, chopped
Hot Sauce

Heat a 12" skillet over high heat. Add 1 Tbs Olive Oil to pan and swirl to coat. Add the chicken breasts and thighs...cook approx 4-5 mins until opaque on the outside. Then scrape into a 6 qt (at least) slow cooker. Return the pan to the high heat and add the remaining oil, and swirl to coat. Add chopped onion, pepper, celery and garlic and saute until softened...about 4 mins. Combine the veggies with the chicken in the slow cooker along with the andouille sausage, cajun seasoning, thyme, paprika, tomatoes and broth. Cook for 5 hours on low.

Turn slow cooker to high and add shrimp and hot sauce. Cook for about 15 mins until shrimp is cooked through. Serve over cauliflower "rice" (recipe follows). Enjoy!

Cauliflower "Rice"

1 Tbs Olive Oil
1 head Cauliflower, pulsed in food processor until it resembles rice

Heat large skillet or wok over high heat. Add oil and swirl to coat the pan. Add "riced" cauliflower to the pan and saute until softened to desired consistency. 3-4 mins for al-dente, 5-6 mins for softer "rice". Season with salt and pepper and serve.

Wine Pairing Recommendation

A crisp white wine such as Sauvignon Blanc is perfect to cut the heat of this spicy dish. We had a super grassy New Zealand Sauv Blanc and it was incredible! My husband is not a fan of spice...but the wine tamed it perfectly! Score for all!! ;-)) Cheers!!



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Korean BBQ Steak with Nuoc Cham Sauce

2 lbs Skirt Steak, less than 1" thick
3 garlic cloves, minced
3 tablespoons tomato paste
2 tablespoons soy sauce (or tamari if GF)
2 tablespoons rice wine or sherry
1 tablespoon Asian fish sauce
1 tablespoon sambal oelek or other Asian chile sauce
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Garnish:

3 tablespoons unsalted roasted peanuts, finely chopped
Cilantro, chopped
Mint leaves, whole

Nuoc Cham Sauce:

1/4 cup sugar
1/3 cup hot water
1/3 cup Asian fish sauce
3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon minced jalapeño
1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger

Combine garlic, tomato paste, soy sauce, rice wine, fish sauce, chile sauce and pepper. Coat steak with this marinade and let sit for at least 30 min or overnight (better). Grill over med-high heat (or broil at high on a rack set over an aluminum foil lined rimmed sheet pan) for about 5-6 min / side for medium-rare, 7-8 min / side for med well. Let rest, covered, 10 mins before slicing and serving (*cook Brussels & Broccoli while steak cools*). Be sure to slice against the grain of the meat. Top with desired garnishes to serve.

While the steak cooks, combine all the ingredients in the Nuoc Cham Sauce. Serve with the steak as a dipping sauce. Enjoy!

Roasted Brussels Sprouts & Broccoli

1 pint Brussels Sprouts (about a pound)
1 lb Broccoli, cut into bite sized florets
3-4 Tbs Olive Oil
Salt & Pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Remove the bottoms off the brussels sprouts, then cut in half and combine with broccoli. Drizzle with oil & sprinkle with Salt & Pepper. Roast for about 10-15 mins until lightly browned and softened slightly.

Wine Pairing Recommendation

A spicy, berry forward red wine such as Malbec would be fantastic with this rich and delicious meal! Cheers!