

Pollo al Marsala

Authentic Italian-Style Chicken Marsala

Cooking Times & Servings

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 25 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients

For the Chicken

- 600 g chicken breast, sliced into thin cutlets - about 1.3 lb
- 80 g all-purpose flour - about 2/3 cup
- Salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 30 g butter - about 2 tablespoons

For the Marsala Sauce

- 300 g fresh cremini mushrooms, sliced - about 10 oz
- 1 small shallot, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 180 ml dry Marsala wine - about 3/4 cup
- 180 ml low-sodium chicken broth - about 3/4 cup
- 20 g butter, for finishing - about 1 1/2 tablespoons
- Fresh parsley, chopped, for garnish

Optional Creamy Version

- 60 ml heavy cream - about 1/4 cup

For a more traditional Italian-style version, leave the cream out. For a richer version, stir it in at the end.

Instructions

1. Prepare the Chicken

Slice the chicken breasts horizontally into thin cutlets. If needed, gently pound them until they are about 1 cm thick. Season both sides with salt and black pepper. Place the flour on a plate and lightly coat each chicken cutlet, shaking off the excess. The coating should be thin, not heavy like breading.

2. Brown the Chicken

Heat the olive oil and 30 g butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When the pan is hot, add the chicken cutlets in a single layer. Cook for about 3-4 minutes per side, or until golden brown. Do not overcrowd the pan. Cook in batches if necessary. Transfer the chicken to a plate and keep warm.

3. Cook the Mushrooms

In the same skillet, add the sliced mushrooms. Cook over medium heat for 5-6 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the mushrooms release their moisture and begin to brown. Let them develop color before adding the wine. This step gives the sauce its deep, savory flavor.

4. Add Shallot and Garlic

Add the finely chopped shallot and garlic to the mushrooms. Cook for about 1 minute, stirring gently, until fragrant. Be careful not to burn the garlic.

5. Deglaze with Marsala Wine

Pour the dry Marsala wine into the skillet. Use a wooden spoon to scrape the browned bits from the bottom of the pan. These pan drippings are essential for a flavorful sauce. Let the wine simmer for 2-3 minutes, allowing the alcohol to cook off and the flavor to concentrate.

6. Add the Broth

Pour in the chicken broth and bring the sauce to a gentle simmer. Cook for 4-5 minutes, or until the sauce begins to reduce and slightly thicken.

7. Return the Chicken to the Pan

Place the chicken cutlets back into the skillet, along with any juices collected on the plate. Simmer for another 2-3 minutes, spooning the sauce over the chicken so it absorbs the Marsala flavor.

8. Finish the Sauce

Stir in the remaining butter until melted and glossy. Taste and adjust with salt and black pepper. If making the creamy version, add the heavy cream at this point and simmer gently for 1-2 minutes.

9. Serve

Serve the Pollo al Marsala hot, topped with mushrooms, sauce, and a sprinkle of fresh parsley. Spoon plenty of Marsala sauce over each chicken cutlet.

Tips for the Best Pollo al Marsala

- Use dry Marsala wine for the most balanced savory flavor.
- Slice the chicken thin so it cooks quickly and stays tender.
- Do not overcrowd the skillet, or the chicken will steam instead of brown.
- Let the mushrooms brown before adding liquid.
- Scrape the bottom of the pan after adding Marsala wine - that is where the flavor is.

- Finish the sauce with butter for a smooth, glossy texture.
- Avoid canned mushrooms because they release too much water and lack flavor.

Serving Suggestions

Serve Pollo al Marsala with creamy mashed potatoes, buttered pasta, rice, roasted potatoes, asparagus, green beans, broccoli, or sauteed spinach. Choose something that can absorb the rich Marsala mushroom sauce.

Storage & Reheating

Refrigerate: Store leftovers in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Freeze: Freeze for up to 2 months.

Reheat: Warm gently in a skillet over medium-low heat with a splash of chicken broth to loosen the sauce. Avoid high heat so the chicken stays tender.