

Oven-Roasted Barbecue Chicken

SERVES Serves 4

TIME 1½ hours, plus 30 minutes resting



Why This Recipe Works

Many recipes for oven-barbecued chicken disappoint with soggy skin and little flavor, so our goals were clear. To fix the issue with the skin, we tried a handful of methods including air-drying and broiling, but in the end the best solution was simply to remove it before cooking. This left the meat exposed, making it easy to add flavor with a simple homemade spice rub. Letting the spiced chicken sit for at least 30 minutes before cooking helped the meat retain moisture, thanks to the salt, which acts as a dry-brine. Using a variety of light and dark meat, we noted that the thinner pieces of the breast meat tended to overcook, which is why we let them sit out for the first 10 minutes of cooking. Spraying the chicken lightly with oil helps the spice rub to bloom and toast in the hot oven, before being basted with barbecue sauce toward the end of cooking. Finally, we noted that elevating the chicken on a wire rack during cooking helped it cook through more evenly.

Gather Your Ingredients

- Vegetable oil spray
- 2** tablespoons chili powder
- 2** tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 1** teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼** teaspoon pepper

Before You Begin

- * Julia loves using the [Easy Bourbon Barbecue Sauce](#) for this recipe, but any style or store-bought brand of sauce will work here.

Instructions

- 2** split chicken breasts, skin removed, trimmed, and cut in half
- 2** chicken drumsticks, skin removed
- 2** chicken thighs, skin removed and trimmed
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup barbecue sauce, plus extra for serving

- 1.** Line rimmed baking sheet with foil, top with wire rack, and spray rack with vegetable oil. Combine chili powder, sugar, salt, and pepper together in medium bowl. Coat chicken thoroughly with spices, transfer to wire rack, and let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes (or cover and refrigerate for up to 12 hours). Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 450 degrees.
- 2.** Spray chicken with veg oil spray. Set thinner, tapered breast pieces aside on plate, and roast remaining chicken for 10 minutes. Add thinner breast pieces to rack and roast chicken for 10 minutes longer.
- 3.** Rotate pan, brush chicken with half of sauce, and cook for 10 minutes. Brush chicken with remaining sauce and continue to cook until breasts register 160 degrees, 10 to 20 minutes. Transfer chicken to platter and let rest for 10 minutes. Serve with additional sauce, as desired.