

Sheet-Pan Malai Chicken and Potatoes

By Zaynab Issa

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Total Time 45 minutes

Prep Time 5 minutes

Cook Time 40 minutes

Rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ (552)



Armando Rafael for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Cyd Raftus McDowell.

Inspired by traditional South Asian malai chicken, a warmly spiced, yogurt-marinated dish that's usually tandoor-grilled or served as a creamy curry, this sheet-pan meal comes together in under an hour. Here, the cream, or malai, is added just before serving, combining with lemon juice and water to create a silky, tangy sauce. The yogurt marinade acts as a powerful tenderizer for the chicken, so even a quick rest will enhance the flavors (if you have time for an overnight marinade, all the better). For this version, a sheet pan is used to maximize surface area and help the potatoes brown, but a cast-iron skillet also works.

INGREDIENTS

Yield: 4 servings

FOR THE CHICKEN AND POTATOES

- 1½ pounds fingerling or baby potatoes
- 1 medium yellow onion
- 1 tablespoon melted ghee or olive oil
- Kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal)
- 4 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs (about 1½ pounds total)
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons heavy cream

FOR THE MARINADE

- ¼ cup full-fat plain yogurt

PREPARATION

Step 1

Arrange the oven rack in the center of the oven and heat to 425 degrees.

Step 2

Start the chicken and potatoes: As the oven heats, halve potatoes lengthwise (quarter and cut any larger ones). Halve the onion lengthwise and cut each half into quarters. Transfer potatoes and onion to a sheet pan, add the ghee and season with 1½ teaspoons salt. Transfer to the preheated oven, and roast for 10 minutes while you prepare the marinade.

Step 3

Make the marinade: Using a blender, mini food processor or immersion blender, combine the yogurt, cilantro, garlic, ginger, chiles, ghee, garam masala and 1½ teaspoons salt. Blend until the mixture is mostly smooth. If needed, add a tablespoon of water to help the blender along. Transfer the marinade to a medium bowl

⅓ cup cilantro leaves and tender stems, torn to fit the blender, plus more cilantro for serving if desired

5 garlic cloves

1 (1½-inch) piece fresh ginger, sliced

1 to 2 serrano chiles, depending on your heat tolerance

1 tablespoon ghee or olive oil

1½ teaspoons garam masala

Kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal)

or resealable bag, and add the chicken. Massage marinade into chicken and let marinate while the potatoes cook (see Tip).

Step 4

When the vegetables have roasted for 10 minutes, remove the pan from the oven and nestle chicken on top, skin side up, scraping any excess marinade from the chicken skin onto the vegetables. Return sheet pan to the oven and adjust heat to 450 degrees. Roast until the chicken and potatoes are cooked through and the chicken skin is browned and crisp, 30 to 35 minutes. (If the potatoes aren't fork-tender yet, remove the chicken from the pan and continue to roast the potatoes for another 5 to 10 minutes.)

Step 5

Carefully transfer the chicken to a plate, leaving the vegetables in the pan. Add the lemon juice, cream and 3 tablespoons hot water to the sheet pan and toss with a metal spatula, carefully scraping up any browned bits, until the potatoes are coated in sauce. Transfer chicken back over top and serve immediately, garnished with more cilantro if you like.

TIP

If you like, the chicken can marinate for up to 2 hours on the counter, or ideally, overnight in the refrigerator. (If marinating overnight, remove the chicken from the fridge at least 30 minutes before roasting to ensure it cooks evenly.)

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