

Poached Chicken Breasts

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Nico Schinco for The New York Times, Food Stylist: Kaitlin Wayne.

Total Time	20 minutes, plus cooling
Prep Time	5 minutes
Cook Time	15 minutes, plus cooling
Rating	★★★★★ (194)

This quick and versatile poached chicken breast recipe can stay in your stable through many seasons. Need an elegant topping for a [bright spring salad](#)? An easily portable contribution for a [potluck picnic](#)? A simple [sandwich](#) anchor for a midday lunch? The chicken is ready in just a few minutes, and works just as well after a day or two in the fridge. As written, the poaching liquid's aromatics skew on the lighter side, so as not to overwhelm any accompanying condiments, dressings and sauces, but you can always double or triple your preferred elements to strengthen the flavor profile.

INGREDIENTS

Yield: 3 chicken breasts

- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (5 to 6 ounces each)
- 1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
- 1 dried bay leaf
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
- Kosher salt (Diamond Crystal)

PREPARATION

Step 1

Place the chicken breasts in a medium saucepan, add enough water to cover by 1 inch and turn the heat to medium-high. Add the peppercorns, bay leaf and garlic, and season with a modest amount of salt.

Step 2

Bring to a boil, then skim and discard foam, and reduce heat to maintain a low simmer. Cover and simmer chicken until tender and cooked through, 12 to 15 minutes.

Step 3

Transfer chicken to a cutting board and discard the poaching liquid. When the chicken is cool enough to touch, thinly slice it against the grain at an angle.

Private Notes

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