

Spicy Vinegar Chicken over Tomatoes

Serves 4

Chicken and tomatoes love to be treated simply and basically left alone (who among us), but they really do sing together. A quick sear and gentle braise in a spicy, vinegar bath, this chicken is perfect on its own, but truly transcendent when served over (not next to) a bed of tomatoes and raw onion, effectively an excellent two-for-one chicken and salad together forever. For the chicken, use any combination of pieces or parts (I like to cut mine from a whole chicken- save the backbone in the freezer for soup/stock), but a package of thighs or breasts or any combo of both would be perfect- just be sure to use bone-in, skin-on. The flavor from both pays dividends to the sauce, which you'll surely want to drink on its own.

Ingredients

1 3 ½–4 lb. chicken, cut into pieces with the bone-in (or just 3–3 ½ lbs. Bone-in, skin-on chicken pieces, such as legs and thighs, all thighs, etc.)

Kosher salt, freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling

1 ½ teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes, plus more

½ cup white distilled vinegar

1 red or yellow onion, thinly sliced

4 cloves garlic, crushed

1 pound tomatoes, thinly sliced

Instructions

- 1 Season chicken with salt and pepper. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Working in batches and starting with the largest pieces, add chicken skin side down and cook until deeply golden brown on one side, 8–10 minutes. Flip chicken and continue to cook until browned on both sides, another 3–4 minutes.
- 2 Transfer chicken to a large plate or rimmed baking sheet and repeat with remaining chicken, turning heat down ever so slightly during the second batch if needed (the pot will already be very hot and you don't want anything to burn).
- 3 Add 4 cloves of crushed garlic and crushed red pepper flakes to the pot, letting it all sizzle in the chicken fat a minute or two. Scatter over about ¾ of the sliced onions and stir, scraping up any fond from the bottom of the pot. Cook onions about 2–3 minutes, just to take the edge off and start to soften.
- 4 Return chicken back to the pot, skin-side up, nestling everything in there nice and tight (overlapping is fine). Add ½ cup vinegar and ⅓ cup water. Season everything (the liquid, the onions) with salt and pepper, and drizzle with a bit more olive oil.
- 5 Bring to a simmer and reduce heat to medium-low and let cook on the stovetop, uncovered, until chicken is cooked through and sauce is slightly thickened and twice as delicious as when it started, 8–10 minutes (perhaps a bit longer for especially large chicken pieces).
- 6 Meanwhile, scatter tomatoes and remaining sliced onion on a large serving platter or your largest dinner plate and season with salt. Using tongs or two forks, transfer chicken on top of the tomatoes. Dip a spoon into the sauce and taste it, seasoning again with salt, pepper and vinegar if you think it needs it. Spoon all the sauce and cooked onions over the chicken and tomatoes and finish with a drizzle of olive oil, some flaky salt, more crushed red pepper flakes and black pepper. I'm not a basil girl, but now would be the time.

DO AHEAD: Chicken can be made a few hours in advance- I wouldn't even re-heat it honestly. That said, the leftovers of this chicken make VERY good soup- basically pull the chicken from the bones, add water or broth and finish with herbs.