

Chicken Riggies

Authentic Chicken Riggies recipe from Utica, NY. Tender chicken and rigatoni in a spicy tomato sauce with cherry peppers. Perfect Italian-American comfort food.

20 min

PREP

30 min

COOK

50 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 1 lb chicken meat
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 onion
- 2 clove garlic
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 12 oz pasta
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp basil
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 cup parmesan cheese

Instructions

1 Prepare ingredients

Bring a large pot of salted water to boil for the pasta. Cut 1 lb chicken into 1-inch bite-sized pieces. Dice 1 onion and mince 2 cloves garlic.

2 Cook the chicken

Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Season chicken pieces with salt and pepper, then add to skillet in a single layer.

- 3 Cook chicken for 6-8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until golden brown on all sides and internal temperature reaches 165°F (74°C). Transfer chicken to a plate and set aside.
- 4 **Build the sauce**

Add diced onion to the same skillet with the remaining oil and cook for 4-5 minutes until soft and translucent. Add minced garlic and cook for 30 seconds until fragrant.
- 5 Add 1 cup crushed tomatoes, 1 tsp oregano, 1 tsp basil, 1 tsp red pepper flakes, and 1 tsp salt to the skillet. Bring to a simmer and cook for 8-10 minutes until sauce thickens slightly.
- 6 Return cooked chicken to the sauce and add 1 cup sliced cherry peppers. Simmer for 2-3 minutes until chicken is heated through and flavors meld.
- 7 **Cook and combine pasta**

Add 12 oz rigatoni pasta to the boiling water and cook according to package directions until al dente, about 10-12 minutes. Reserve 1 cup pasta cooking water before draining.
- 8 Add drained pasta directly to the skillet with the chicken and sauce. Toss vigorously for 1-2 minutes, adding reserved pasta water 2-3 tablespoons at a time until sauce coats the pasta smoothly.
- 9 Remove from heat and serve immediately in bowls, topped with grated Parmesan cheese.

Tips

Use boneless chicken thighs instead of breasts for more tender, flavorful results that won't dry out during cooking.

Reserve some hot pasta cooking water before draining - its starch content helps bind the sauce to the rigatoni perfectly.

Toast your dried herbs in the hot oil for 30 seconds before adding other ingredients to release maximum flavor.

Don't overcook the garlic - it should be fragrant but not browned, which can make it bitter.

Add cherry peppers near the end of cooking to preserve their texture and prevent them from becoming mushy.

Let the dish rest for 5 minutes after combining pasta and sauce to allow flavors to meld and sauce to thicken slightly.

Freshly grated cheese makes a significant difference - avoid pre-grated varieties for the best flavor and texture.

Save some pasta cooking liquid even after serving - it's perfect for loosening leftovers when reheating.

