

Peri Peri Chicken (Nando's Copycat)

Make authentic Peri Peri Chicken at home with this Nando's copycat recipe. Spicy African bird's eye chilies, garlic, and herbs create the perfect marinade.

40 min

PREP

15 min

COOK

55 min

TOTAL

6

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 4 chicken meat
- 1 bell pepper
- 8 clove garlic
- 1 cup vinegar
- 1 cup olive oil
- 2 tsp oregano
- 2 tsp paprika
- 2 tsp rosemary
- 1 tsp granulated sugar
- 1 cup parsley
- 1 lemon
- 2 bay leaf
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup mayonnaise

Instructions

1 Make the peri peri marinade

Add 1 red bell pepper (roughly chopped), 4 African bird's eye chilies, 8 garlic cloves, 1 cup white vinegar, 1 cup olive oil, 2 teaspoons oregano, 2 teaspoons paprika, 2 teaspoons rosemary, and 1 teaspoon salt to a food processor. Pulse 8-10 times until roughly chopped with no large chunks remaining.

- 2 Transfer the mixture to a medium saucepan and add 2 bay leaves. Simmer over medium-low heat for 20 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes to prevent sticking, until the mixture has thickened slightly and the raw garlic smell has mellowed.
- 3 Remove bay leaves and let the cooked mixture cool for 10 minutes. Return to the food processor and blend for 1-2 minutes until completely smooth. Add 1 cup fresh parsley and 1 teaspoon sugar, then pulse 5-6 times until the parsley is finely chopped and incorporated.
- 4 **Marinate the chicken**

Place 4 chicken breasts (sliced horizontally into cutlets) in a large bowl or zip-top bag. Pour the peri peri marinade over the chicken and massage to coat all pieces thoroughly. Marinate in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours or up to 24 hours for maximum flavor.
- 5 **Prepare for cooking**

Remove the marinated chicken from the refrigerator 20 minutes before cooking to bring to room temperature. Reserve 2 tablespoons of marinade for basting and discard the rest that touched raw chicken.
- 6 **Cook the chicken**

Heat a large skillet or grill pan over medium-high heat until very hot, about 3 minutes. Add the marinated chicken pieces in a single layer, leaving space between each piece to avoid overcrowding.
- 7 Cook for 4-5 minutes without moving the chicken, until the bottom develops a golden-brown crust. Flip the chicken and cook for another 3-4 minutes until the internal temperature reaches 165°F (74°C) when checked with a meat thermometer.
- 8 **Rest and serve**

Transfer the chicken to a serving plate and brush with the reserved clean marinade. Let rest for 3 minutes before serving to allow juices to redistribute.

Tips

For ultra-flavorful peri peri chicken, roast the red peppers over an open flame or under the broiler until charred, then peel off the blackened skin before adding to the food processor. This adds a subtle smokiness that elevates the entire dish.

Always taste your marinade before using it, keeping in mind that cooking will reduce the heat level by about 20-30%. Add slightly more spice than you think you want for the perfect final result.

If your marinade seems too thick, thin it with a tablespoon of chicken stock or additional lemon juice. If it's too thin, add a tablespoon of tomato paste to thicken and add depth.

Let marinated chicken come to room temperature for 20-30 minutes before cooking. This ensures even cooking and prevents the outside from overcooking while the inside remains underdone.

Save some unmarinated marinade separately to brush on the chicken after cooking for an extra burst of fresh peri peri flavor and vibrant color.

Don't overcrowd the pan when frying - cook in batches if necessary. Overcrowding lowers the pan temperature and leads to steaming rather than proper searing.

Use a splatter screen when frying to contain the inevitable splattering from the oil and marinade, which will keep your stovetop clean and prevent burns.

Double the marinade recipe and freeze half in ice cube trays for quick single-serving portions that can be thawed and used for quick weeknight meals or to spice up vegetables and other proteins.