

BAKED PARMESAN CRUSTED CHICKEN

This is some of the best chicken I've made in ages. The coating is extra crispy. You think you're eating chicken that's been fried but it's not. The secret is using panko bread crumbs. The interior is tender, juicy, moist, and absolutely delicious. It's the perfect complement to the crispy, crunchy exterior. There's so much flavor from the Parmesan. It also crisps up along with the bread crumbs. The chicken is so easy, ready in about 25 minutes, and cleanup is a breeze.

Yield: serves 4 **Prep Time:** 5 minutes **Cook Time:** about 20 to 25 minutes

- one pound boneless skinless chicken breasts, sliced in 4 thin pieces (see tip below)
 - about 3 tablespoons olive oil
 - 1 scant cup panko bread crumbs
 - 1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
 - 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
 - 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or to taste
 - 2 to 3 tablespoons fresh Italian flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped for garnishing
1. Preheat oven to 425F. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil, set aside.
 2. To a large ziptop plastic bag, add the chicken. Tip - I recommend buying one 1-pound breast from your butcher. Slice it in half horizontally so you have two thin halves, then slice each half vertically, so you now have 4 pieces. If you can't get chicken from the butcher, do your best so you end up with one pound of thinly sliced breasts.
 3. Add the olive oil, seal bag, and smoosh chicken around so it's evenly coated with oil.
 4. Unseal bag, add the panko, parmesan, oregano, salt, pepper, seal, and smoosh chicken around so it's evenly coated.
 5. Transfer chicken to baking sheet. There will likely be a fair amount of panko mixture in the bag. Using your hands or a spoon, add a couple tablespoons of the mixture to each breast so it's quite thickly coated on the top side.
 6. Bake for about 20 to 25 minutes or until chicken reaches an internal temp of 165F and is lightly golden browned. You don't have to flip it. I baked for 25 minutes for a richer golden color. Bake until done; all ovens, climates, and thickness of chicken varies and impact baking time.
 7. Garnish with parsley and optionally serve with lemon. Serve immediately. Chicken is best warm and fresh.