

Peking Chicken with Shallot & Ginger Dressing

I recently saw a version of this delectable Peking Chicken dish on Instagram and new instantly that I had to cook it. What I love about this dish is that being chicken, it is way more accessible to the average Joe than the traditional Peking Duck. Duck is harder to come by, more expensive and it is not uncommon for people to have some juicy free range thigh fillets, skin on and bone in, lying around. You could absolutely serve this Peking Chicken with the traditional cucumber, green onions and pancakes but I thought I would make it more of a main than a starter and serve it with steamed rice, Asian greens and a delicious hot dressing of Ginger & Shallots (or green onions). The dressing was the game changer and would be absolutely divine with all sorts of Asian dishes and particularly dumplings. It is super simple to make, needs only 5 ingredients and a little goes a long way and to speed the Peking Chicken up, I bought a Peking Sauce from the Asian section of the supermarket. I don't normally use cheats but hey, I'm only human right? Anyhoo, it was totally yum. The family will love this one.....

Prep time: 20 Minutes

Cooking time: 1 Hour

\$\$ Medium Budget

Serves 4

For the Peking Chicken:

Peanut oil for frying (veggie if allergic)

8 Chicken thigh fillets, skin on and bone in (2 per person but you may only need one depending on the size of the thighs)

1 tbs of Chinese 5 Spice

1 tsp of seas salt flakes

1 Jar of Peking Sauce

1 cup of coriander leaves

Green ends of shallots used for dressing, finely sliced diagonally

Sesame seeds for sprinkling

Jasmine rice and Steamed Asian Greens to serve

For the Shallot & Ginger Dressing:

5 spring onions, ends removed and finely sliced (reserve the green tips for

garnish)

2 tbs of finely grated ginger

1 tsp of sea salt

5 tbs of Peanut Oil (you could use a vegetable or coconut oil if allergic)

1 tsp of sesame oil

Preheat the oven to 180°C

To prepare the peking chicken, lay the thigh fillets out on a large sheet of baking paper. Pat the thighs dry with paper towel and place the 5 Spice and sea salt in a small bowl and stir to combine. Sprinkle the thigh fillets liberally with the spice mix and rub it in with your hands so all of the skin and meat is coated in the mix. Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty.

Heat a large, heavy based pan and add a little oil. Fry the the thigh fillets skin side down until golden and then turn and fry the other side for a few minutes. Transfer the fillets to a lined baking tray if your pan can't go in the oven and then baste the thigh fillets on top with a nice thick layer of the Peking sauce. Bake in the oven for 25 minutes and then baste again before cooking for a further 30 minutes. Remove the chicken from the oven and spoon over the pan juices allowing the chicken to rest for a 5 minutes before serving.

Place the remainder of the Peking Sauce in a bowl and thin it out slightly with 1-2 tablespoons of boiling water. Serve this with the chicken.

While the Peking Chicken is in the oven, place the spring onions, ginger and sea salt in a heat proof bowl. Place the peanut and sesame oil in a small saucepan and gently heat until the oil is piping hot. To test the oil, pop in a piece of spring onion and if it sizzles immediately and rapidly, it is ready. Pour the hot oil over the ginger, salt and shallots and stir to combine. The hot oil cooks the ginger and onion and takes away the strong raw flavour. I loved this dressing, pure genius.

Pop the coriander leaves and spring onion garnish into a small bowl of iced water to freshen up. Drain before serving.

To serve the dish, place some steamed rice on serving plates (I like to spoon it into a ramekin first as I think it looks nice and neat). Place a couple of the Peking Chicken thighs on the plates and spoon over the dressing. Top with the coriander garnish and sprinkle over sesame seeds. Feel free to drizzle over any chicken juices but be careful not to spoon out too much oil as the dressing is oily. Serve with Asian greens of your choice.