

Lebanese Lemon Garlic Chicken - Al Aseel copycat

Recipe video above. A copycat of a signature dish at Al Aseel, a popular Lebanese restaurant in Sydney! Chicken is marinated in a bold lemon-garlic yogurt mix, then smothered in a garlicky lemon yogurt sauce. Warm yogurt may sound unusual, but one bite will win you over! Serve with pita bread and Fattoush.



4.73 from 29 votes

PS. Please measure the garlic - too much is harsh, too little is sad.

PPS. The salt might seem a lot, but please trust, it's not salty!

Prep Time 15 mins	Cook Time 10 mins	Total Time 25 mins
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Course: Main Cuisine: lebanese Keyword: lebanese chicken, lemon garlic chicken

Servings: 3 - 4 people Calories: 285cal Author: Nagi

Ingredients

- 500g/ 1lb chicken tenderloin (or breast), cut into 4cm / 1.5" squares, large vein cut out (Note 1)

Lemon garlic marinade:

- 4 tbsp Greek or plain yogurt
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp garlic , finely grated or crushed using garlic press (~4 big cloves)
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp cooking salt / kosher salt (1/2 tsp table salt, 1 1/4 tsp flakes)

Lemon garlic yogurt sauce:

- 1 cup Greek or plain yogurt , full fat essential here!
- 3/4 tsp garlic , finely grated or crushed using garlic press (~1 clove)
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp tahini (hulled), or extra 1 tbsp olive oil (Note 3)
- 1 tbsp+ water
- 1 tsp cooking salt / kosher salt (1/2 tsp table salt, 1 1/4 tsp flakes)

Cooking & serving:

- 2 tbsp olive oil , for cooking
- 1 tsp parsley , roughly chopped (or equal amounts mint and parsley)
- Lemon wedges and extra virgin olive oil , for garnish
- Lebanese bread for sauce mopping (recommended)

Instructions

ABBREVIATED RECIPE:

1. Marinade chicken 12 - 24 hrs. Cook in 2 batches. Whisk sauce, rest 1 hr, warm just before serving. Smother chicken, serve!

FULL RECIPE:

1. **Marinade** - Mix the marinade ingredients in a bowl. Add the chicken, toss to coat then refrigerate to marinate for 12 - 24 hours (Note 2).
2. **Sauce** - Put the sauce ingredients in a microwaveable bowl and whisk to combine. Set aside for 1 hour + to let the garlic flavour meld. (Note 4)
3. **Cook chicken** - Drain off excess marinade from the chicken. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a large non stick pan over high heat. Place half the chicken in and cook for 1 1/2 - 2 minutes on each side until golden. Remove onto a plate.
4. **Repeat** - Scrape out / roughly wipe loose black bits out of the pan. Reheat remaining oil and cook remaining chicken. Rest for 2 minutes.
5. **Warm sauce** - While the chicken is resting, microwave for 40 seconds to warm (but not hot) then give it a good whisk. *Taste and add more lemon for tangier, or more water to loosen (some yogurts are thicker than others).*
6. **Serving** - Spread half the sauce in a shallow bowl. Use a spatula to transfer the chicken onto the yogurt. Spoon over remaining sauce, finish with a swish of olive oil and sprinkle of parsley. Serve!

Notes

1. Tenderloin - I cut larger pieces into 4 and smaller into 3, don't cut too small, pain to turn so many pieces over one by one. Cut the thick white vein out of the piece from the thicker end (it gets thinner so it doesn't bother me in the other pieces).

- Breast - cut the small pointy end off (that can be one piece) then slice the rest lengthways into 1.5cm / 0.6" thick slices, then into 4cm/1.5" squares.
- Boneless thighs also work. Cut or even cook them whole (you could do about 750g/1.5lb)

2. Marinating time - up to 48 hrs is fine but beyond 24 hrs doesn't add anything. Absolute minimum is 3 hrs though obviously not quite as tender, it still has good flavour on the surface.

3. Tahini - Don't think Al Aseel uses tahini, I think they mix yogurt with toum which is a Lebanese garlic dip made with a lot of oil. A small amount of tahini instead provides mouthfeel richness without overwhelming sesame flavour. Substitute with an extra 1 tbsp of olive oil.

4. Sauce - I usually make it at the same time as the marinade then keep it in the fridge overnight. If I only leave it for 1 hour, I just leave on the counter.

Leftovers will keep 3 days in the fridge.

Making ahead - Chicken can be mixed in marinade and put in freezer straight away, it will marinate while thawing overnight. Sauce can be mixed the day before, refrigerate then warm before serving.

Nutrition per serving, assuming 4 servings and all the sauce is consumed.

