

Our State eats

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Cheerwine Barbecued Chicken

Yield: 6 to 8 servings.

Sauce

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1 cup Cheerwine
- 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dry mustard
- 2 tablespoons white distilled vinegar

Chicken

- 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper
- 12 skin-on, bone-in chicken thighs (about 4 pounds)

For the sauce: Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the minced garlic and cook for 30 seconds. Stir in the remaining ingredients.

Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer until the sauce is slightly thickened, about 30 minutes. Use soon or cool, cover, and refrigerate for up to one week.

For the chicken: Stir together the thyme, oregano, paprika, cumin, onion powder, salt, and pepper. Pat the chicken dry and then coat with the seasoning mixture. Place the chicken in a zip-top plastic freezer bag. Seal and refrigerate for 4 hours.



Preheat the grill to 350° to 400° (medium-high) heat. (If using charcoal, the embers should be covered in gray ash with glowing centers.) Oil the grill grate generously.

Place the chicken skin-side down on the hot grate; cook until the skin browns, about 8 minutes. Turn the chicken over and continue grilling until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest portion registers 170°, about 5 to 8 minutes longer. Transfer 1 cup of the barbecue sauce to a small dish, reserving the rest. Brush the skin side of the chicken with sauce from the dish; turn skin side down and cook 2 minutes. Brush chicken with more sauce; turn skin side up and grill 2 minutes.

Arrange the chicken on a platter, tent loosely with foil, and let rest for 5 minutes. Discard any remaining sauce in the small bowl because it has come in contact with the raw chicken and would be unsafe to eat uncooked.

Serve the barbecued chicken warm with the reserved sauce.

Note: *Chicken thighs or leg quarters are best for grilling because white meat pieces dry out easily. If you barbecue bone-in breasts, keep them on the coolest part of the grill. Boneless, skinless chicken breasts are not a good choice for this recipe.*

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