

Chicken Parma Bake



Serves 6

Ingredients For the Croutons

- 1 large French baguette
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/3 cup parmesan cheese
- Kosher salt and pepper to taste

Ingredients For the Marinara Sauce

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- Half of one brown onion, chopped
- 3-4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 pinches of red pepper flakes
- 1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste

Ingredients For the Chicken

- 3 large chicken breasts (about 3.25 lbs.)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Kosher salt and pepper
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella
- 1 cup grated parmesan cheese

Steps

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. I start with the sauce as it should simmer for a couple hours to enhance the flavors. Begin by sauteing the garlic and onions together in olive oil over medium-high heat for about 8 minutes. Add oregano, salt, and red pepper flakes.
3. Carefully add the crushed tomatoes and tomato paste making sure to stir everything well. Let simmer low for a few hours. Taste for seasonings and add a little water if a thinner consistency is desired.
4. Now cut the baguette into 1 - 2 inch cubes. In a large bowl toss the cubes of bread with the oil, minced garlic, parmesan cheese, salt and pepper. Spread out into a single layer onto a baking sheet pan and bake for 15 - 20 minutes until croutons are golden brown around the edges and when you poke them in the center they are not soft.
5. Coat a 9" x 12" baking dish with olive oil. Season the chicken with salt and pepper (if the breast are large I cut them first to make more of a chicken-tender sized piece). Put the chicken in the baking dish and top with the minced garlic and a little more olive oil.
6. Put the prepared marinara sauce on top of the chicken pieces, followed by all the mozzarella and half of the parmesan cheese. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes. Carefully take out of the oven and add the croutons and the rest of the parmesan cheese. Return to oven for another 20 minutes (make sure your chicken is cooked to 165°F). Serve warm.