

FOOD & DINING

Make a household favorite healthier

Many beloved dishes might be enjoyed more often if they were only a little healthier. Author and former personal chef Michelle Dudash was once asked by a client if she could make a healthier version of chicken parmesan. The result of that request is the following recipe for "Skinny Chicken Parmesan with Spinach," which Dudash ultimately included in her book, "Clean Eating For Busy Families" (Fair Winds). The recipe was a hit with Dudash's client and will surely be a hit at home cooks' dinner tables as well.

SKINNY CHICKEN PARMESAN WITH SPINACH

Makes 6 servings

For the sauce:

- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 28-ounce can whole tomatoes
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 pinches salt
- 2 pinches freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon honey

For the chicken:

- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons whole-wheat flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 1/2 pounds chicken breast, cut into 6 pieces, pounded to 1/4 inch
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 4 cups baby spinach
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 3/4 cup fresh mozzarella

- 6 cups cooked whole-grain thin spaghetti tossed in 2 teaspoons olive oil



Preheat oven to 375 F and coat the bottom of a 9 x 13-inch pan with olive oil spray.

To make the sauce: Heat a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add oil and garlic and cook gently for 30 seconds. Do not brown. With your hand, squeeze each tomato into the pan and add basil, oregano, salt, pepper, and honey. Reduce to medium heat and simmer for 20 minutes, lowering the heat as needed.

To make the chicken: Combine parmesan cheese, flour, salt, pepper, and basil in a medium dish and coat chicken with cheese mixture. Place a large skillet over medium heat and add 2 tablespoons of oil. When oil is shimmering, add chicken, rounded-side down, and cook until golden on one side, about 5 minutes. Arrange chicken in a baking pan. Pour remaining 2 teaspoons of oil into skillet and add spinach. Cook spinach for 1 to 2 minutes until wilted and swirl in lemon juice. Gently press spinach to release water and divide spinach on top of chicken. Spoon sauce around and over the chicken, place mozzarella on top, and sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon salt. Bake for 15 minutes until chicken is cooked through. Serve over spaghetti.

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