

LEMON GARLIC CHICKEN PENNE WITH PESTO AND SPINACH

Preparation: 30 minutes | Cooking: 45 minutes | Servings: 4

INGREDIENTS

1 1/4 pounds bone-in chicken breast halves, skinned
1 package baby spinach
2 cups fresh basil leaves
1 1/4 cups whole wheat penne pasta
1/4 cup dried tomatoes
1/4 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup reduced sodium chicken broth
6 tablespoons grated parmesan
3 tablespoons minced garlic
2 tablespoons pine nuts
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon finely shredded lemon peel
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1/8 teaspoon salt



INSTRUCTIONS

For marinade, in a small bowl, combine lemon peel, lemon juice and 2 tablespoons garlic. Place chicken in a resealable plastic bag. Pour marinade over chicken. Seal bag, and turn to coat chicken. Marinate in refrigerator for 30 minutes, turning bag occasionally. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Drain chicken and discard marinade. Sprinkle chicken with black pepper and 1/8 teaspoon salt. Place chicken in a foil-lined shallow roasting pan. Roast for 40 minutes or until an instant-read thermometer inserted into inside thigh muscle registers 165 degrees. Allow to cool before removing meat from the bone, and shred or cut into bitesize pieces. Transfer to an airtight freezer container. Cover and seal. To serve, cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Meanwhile, place dried tomatoes in a small bowl; pour enough hot water over tomatoes to cover, and let stand until tomatoes are softened. Cut softened tomatoes into thin bitesize strips. For pesto, in a small skillet, cook pine nuts over medium heat about 3 minutes or until toasted, stirring often; set aside to cool. In a food processor, combine basil, pine nuts, oil, 2 tablespoons parmesan and 1 tablespoon garlic. Cover and process until smooth. In a large skillet, heat broth over medium heat until boiling. Add spinach; cook and stir about 1 minute or until spinach starts to wilt. Add chicken, crushed red pepper and 1/8 teaspoon salt. Cook about 2 minutes more or until spinach is completely wilted. Stir in cooked pasta, pesto and dried tomatoes. Cook about 5 minutes or until chicken is heated through (165 degrees). Sprinkle with 4 teaspoons parmesan.