



the  
fit gourmet

# Balsamic Chicken

*with Peppers, Raisins,  
Almonds & Fresh Thyme*

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The best balsamic vinegars have nothing else added to them - only the grapes.

Lesser ones will add brown sugar or caramel to mimic the sweetness of the better ones. If a company produces a "traditional" balsamic vinegar, they will also produce a less expensive, but high quality vinegar as well. This is the same vinegar with the same heritage but not aged as long. You can have confidence in purchasing these balsamic vinegars.

**CHECK YOUR LABELS!**

**Bursting with flavor!**

**Ingredients:**

- 2 Tablespoon olive oil, divided
- 2 red bell peppers, cut into strips
- 2 yellow bell peppers, cut into strips
- 2 green bell peppers, cut into strips
- 1/3 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoon fresh thyme, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 lb. chicken breast, boneless and skinless
- 1/2 cup Italian-style dry breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted



**Directions:**

- 1 In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium-high heat. Sauté peppers for 6-8 minutes. Next, add raisins, balsamic vinegar, sugar, thyme, salt and pepper then sauté for another minute. Remove from heat.
- 2 Cut chicken breasts in half lengthwise. Next place chicken between two sheets of plastic wrap on a cutting board and pound out gently with a meat mallet using the flat side. (This will guarantee the tenderest chicken.) Then cut each chicken breast into 3 or 4 bite-size pieces, depending on chicken breast size.
- 3 On a large plate or shallow dish combine breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese. Dredge each piece of chicken through breadcrumb mixture and set aside.
- 4 In a large skillet, heat remaining oil over a medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook 3 minutes each side or until done. Next, combine pepper mixture with chicken and toss together well. Serve over brown rice topped with toasted almonds and fresh thyme! Bon Appetite!

**Did you know?**

- Balsamic Vinegar is made from white Trebbiano grapes. ‘Balsamic’ means ‘like balsam’ - and balsam is an aromatic resin - balsamic vinegar simply refers to the fact that it is thick (resin like) and aromatic. This aromatic, flavorful vinegar ages to a rich, dark brown. It has a full-bodied, slightly sweet flavor with a hint of tartness and is best known for its flavoring in vinaigrettes, sauces, and many aromatic dishes. Balsamic Vinegar can be found in most large supermarkets and gourmet stores.
  - Modena Italy’s balsamic vinegar is aged at least 6 to 12 years and some are aged for 50 to 100 years. (As could be expected, these vinegars can be quite expensive, some costing over \$200 per ounce!)
  - This distinctive vinegar has long been cherished: in fact, it was once considered so valuable that it was included in the dowries of young ladies of nobility and was specifically mentioned in wills. And in 1944, when reports of approaching American bombers reached the Modena area, small kegs of balsamic vinegar were packed up along with money, jewelry and other valuables.
- Reference: [www.foodreference.com](http://www.foodreference.com)

**While you have the Balsamic out ...**

**Balsamic Vinaigrette**

**Ingredients**

- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon light brown sugar
- 1 garlic clove, crushed through a press (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

**Instructions**

To make the vinaigrette, in a medium bowl whisk all the ingredients except the oil until mixed. Gradually whisk in the oil until smooth.

Yield: about 1 cup

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**Grilled Asparagus and Tomatoes with Balsamic Vinaigrette**

- 12 ounces asparagus, trimmed
  - 6 ripe tomatoes, halved
  - 3 tablespoons olive oil
  - 1 clove garlic, minced
  - 1 tablespoon mustard
  - 3 tablespoons Balsamic vinegar
  - 1/3 cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper Heat grill pan over medium high heat. In a large bowl toss asparagus with olive oil and salt and pepper. Brush tomatoes with remaining olive oil in bowl. Grill asparagus and tomatoes, separately until tender but not falling apart. In a bowl combine garlic, mustard, balsamic vinegar, and olive oil with a whisk or hand blender. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve grilled vegetables drizzled with vinaigrette.

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