

Slow-Cooker Mexican Shredded Chicken

Serves: 6-8

Prep Time:

20 minutes prior to cooking;

15 minutes after

Cooking Time:

5 hrs (HIGH); 9-10 hrs (LOW)

INGREDIENTS

2 cups ketchup

1 cup peach preserves

1/4 cup dark molasses

2 TBSP brown sugar

2 TBSP red wine vinegar

2 TBSP Dijon mustard

1 tsp ground cumin

1 tsp ground paprika

Kosher Salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1 TBSP extra-virgin olive oil

2 slices bacon

1 small bunch fresh thyme

1/2 onion, peeled

3 garlic cloves, peeled and lightly smashed

3 pounds FROZEN boneless, skinless chicken breasts

1 cup (8-oz) chicken stock

Tortillas (Burrito, Soft Taco, or Fajita-sized) or Hard Tacos, for serving

Special Equipment: 4-6 quart slow-cooker

Toppings: (optional for serving... use these or pick your own!)

Shredded Cheese, kind of your choice!

Sour Cream

Hot sauce

Cilantro, roughly chopped



DIRECTIONS

Pre-heat a slow-cooker on HIGH for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, whisk together the ketchup, peach preserves, molasses, brown sugar, red wine vinegar, dijon mustard, cumin, paprika, 1 teaspoon salt, and 3-4 grinds of pepper.

When the slow-cooker is pre-heated, drizzle in the olive oil and, using oven mitts, pick up the slow-cooker dish and swirl the oil around to coat the bottom of the pot. Place the pot back into place and add in the 2 slices of bacon. Next, toss in the bunch of thyme. {TIP: tying this bundle together with kitchen twine will make it easier to remove later}. Then toss in the peeled onion half and the peeled, lightly smashed garlic cloves. Place all the frozen chicken breasts in the cooker, then pour the ketchup mixture over the top of everything. Be sure to scrape every last bit into the slow-cooker! Pour the 1 cup of chicken stock on top of everything. Give the whole mixture a gentle stir, turning the chicken breasts over a couple of times to coat. Then it's time to cover the pot!

Cook for 5 hours on HIGH (or 9-10 hours on LOW). Using a tongs, turn the chicken breasts 1-2 times during this cooking time, if possible. After 5 hours, carefully use a tongs to move the chicken breasts from the pot to a large cutting board (or a clean work surface).

Use pot holders or oven mitts to pour the contents of the crockpot through a fine mesh strainer into a large stockpot or dutch oven. Bring the strained sauce to a boil, then turn down the heat to medium-low. Let the sauce simmer and reduce for 5-6 minutes.

Meanwhile, use two forks to shred all of the chicken breasts. Once the sauce is done simmering, add all the shredded chicken in with the sauce and stir to combine. Turn the heat to low and let the chicken heat through. Turn off the heat and serve! (Or, return the meat-sauce mixture back to the slow-cooker pot and set your slow-cooker on the "KEEP WARM" setting until ready-to-serve.

TO SERVE

Assemble burritos just before serving or allow people to assemble their own!

Crunchy Tacos, Burritos, Soft Tacos, & Fajitas:

Use hard tacos or tortillas (burrito, soft taco, or fajita-size) to assemble your meal. Fill tacos or tortillas with shredded chicken. Top with shredded cheese, sour cream, and chopped cilantro, as desired.

Burrito Bowl:

You could also make a burrito bowl instead of using taco shells or tortillas. You might want to rinse, drain, and heat up some black beans to add our mixture in this case? Otherwise, simply fill a bowl with the shredded chicken, add some toppings and you're good to go!

Nachos:

Simply melt some cheese over individual plates of chips (or a platter of chips). Top the nachos with the shredded chicken, more shredded cheese, sour cream, hot sauce, and cilantro, as desired!