

Filipino Chicken Adobo

Authentic Filipino Chicken Adobo recipe with soy sauce, vinegar, and garlic. This traditional dish brings the bold, tangy flavors of the Philippines home.

1h 10min

PREP

50 min

COOK

2h

TOTAL

6

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Filipino Chicken Adobo

Ingredients

- 1 lb chicken thigh
- 1 cup soy sauce
- 1 cup vinegar
- 6 clove garlic
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 3 bay leaf
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

Instructions

- 1 Marinate the Chicken**

Combine 1 lb chicken pieces, 1 cup soy sauce, 1 cup vinegar, 6 minced garlic cloves, 1 tsp whole peppercorns, and 3 bay leaves in a large bowl. Mix well to coat all chicken pieces evenly. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight for best flavor.
- 2 Brown the Chicken**

Heat 1 tbsp vegetable oil in a heavy-bottomed pan or Dutch oven over medium-high heat until shimmering. Remove chicken from marinade and reserve all the liquid. Sear chicken pieces for 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown on all surfaces.
- 3 Pour the reserved marinade over the browned chicken. Add 1 tsp brown sugar and stir gently to dissolve completely. Bring to a gentle boil over medium heat, about 3-5 minutes.**
- 4 Simmer the Adobo**

Reduce heat to low and cover the pan partially. Simmer for 30-40 minutes, stirring occasionally, until chicken is fork-tender and sauce has reduced by half to a glossy, thick consistency.
- 5 Taste and adjust seasoning with additional soy sauce or vinegar as needed. Remove bay leaves and discard.**
- 6 Let adobo rest off heat for 5 minutes to allow sauce to thicken slightly. Serve hot over steamed rice, spooning the glossy sauce over chicken and rice.**

Tips

Marinate the chicken for at least one hour, but overnight marination produces the deepest, most complex flavors as the acids and aromatics fully penetrate the meat.

Use bone-in chicken pieces like thighs and drumsticks for maximum flavor and tenderness - the bones add richness to the sauce and prevent the meat from drying out during the long simmer.

Don't skip the browning step - searing the marinated chicken before simmering creates beautiful color and adds crucial depth of flavor through the Maillard reaction.

Simmer on low heat rather than boiling vigorously to ensure the chicken becomes tender without becoming tough, and to allow the sauce to reduce properly without scorching.

Resist the urge to stir frequently during simmering, as this can break apart the chicken pieces - gentle, occasional stirring is sufficient for even cooking.

Adjust the brown sugar to taste, starting with less and adding more as needed - some prefer a more pronounced sweet element while others like the dish more savory.

Let the finished adobo rest for 5-10 minutes before serving to allow the sauce to thicken slightly and the flavors to settle into perfect harmony.

Remove the bay leaves and whole peppercorns before serving, though some families leave them in as traditional presentation - just warn guests not to bite into them directly.