

Mediterranean Salad with Lemon-Herb Chicken

Prep: 25 min | Cook: 25 min | Makes: 4

Tender Boston lettuce, juicy blueberries, sweet peppers, tomatoes, and buttery garlic-lemon chicken, all tossed with a deeply citrusy roasted-lemon vinaigrette.

Ingredients

For the lemon-herb chicken

- 1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into bite-size pieces
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

For the salad

- 2 heads Boston or Bibb lettuce, leaves torn
- ½ sweet onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 sweet bell pepper, chopped
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup finely grated Manchego, plus more to finish

For the roasted-lemon vinaigrette

- 2 lemons, halved
- ⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ½ teaspoon Italian seasoning
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Method

1. Heat the oven to 425°F. Place the lemon halves cut-side down on a small parchment-lined pan and roast for 18 to 22 minutes, until softened and deeply caramelized at the edges. Set aside until cool enough to handle.

2. Meanwhile, combine the chicken with the olive oil, melted butter, garlic, lemon zest and juice, Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper. Toss thoroughly and marinate for 20 minutes while the lemons roast.
3. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken in a single layer and sauté for 7 to 9 minutes, turning occasionally, until golden at the edges and cooked through to 165°F. Transfer to a plate and let it rest for 5 minutes.
4. Squeeze the roasted lemons into a bowl to obtain about 3 tablespoons juice. Whisk in the Dijon, honey, Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper. Slowly stream in the olive oil while whisking until the vinaigrette is smooth and emulsified.
5. Place the torn Boston lettuce, sweet onion, blueberries, sweet pepper, and cherry tomatoes in a large serving bowl.
6. Add the warm lemon-herb chicken and half of the grated Manchego. Drizzle with about two-thirds of the roasted-lemon vinaigrette and toss gently so the tender lettuce stays intact.
7. Taste and add more vinaigrette, salt, or pepper as needed. Finish with the remaining Manchego grated generously over the top and serve immediately.

Kitchen notes

Add the chicken while it is still slightly warm, then grate Manchego directly over the bowl. The warmth softens the cheese and helps the roasted-lemon vinaigrette cling to every leaf.