North African-Inspired Curry Chicken Salad with Apricots, Pistachios & Ras el Hanout

Prep: 20 minutes + marinating | Cook: 25-30 minutes + 1 hour chill | Makes: About 8 portions of chicken salad

Creamy chicken salad layered with warm ras el hanout and Madras curry, plus dried apricots, pistachios, apple, and raisins.

Ingredients

For the marinated chicken

• 3 chicken breasts, cut into bite-size cubes

• ½ cup light sour cream

• 2 tablespoons olive oil

• 1 tablespoon freshly grated ginger

• 1 tablespoon ras el hanout

• 2 teaspoons Madras curry powder

• 1 teaspoon kosher salt

• ½ teaspoon black pepper

For the chicken salad

• 6 ounces dried apricots, sliced

• ⅔ cup shelled pistachios, lightly chopped

• ¾ Honeycrisp or Granny Smith apple, or a favorite apple, diced

• 1 cup raisins (or golden raisins or dried Zante currants)

• 1 small sweet onion, diced

• 1 cup light mayonnaise

• ½ cup light sour cream or plain Greek yogurt

• 2 teaspoons ras el hanout

• 1 teaspoon Madras curry powder

• ½ teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste

• ¼ teaspoon black pepper, plus more to taste

Method

1. Marinate the chicken: Cut the chicken breasts into bite-size cubes. In a bowl, whisk together the light sour cream, olive oil, grated ginger, ras el hanout, Madras curry powder, kosher salt, and black pepper. Add the chicken and toss until coated. Cover and refrigerate for 8 to 10 hours or overnight.

2. Heat the oven to 375 degrees. Spread the chicken and marinade in a roasting pan. Roast for about 25 to 30 minutes, checking the cubes early because their size affects cooking time. Cook until the thickest pieces reach 165 degrees on an instant-read thermometer.

3. Let the chicken cool, then shred it with a fork and set aside.

4. In a large bowl, combine the sliced apricots, chopped pistachios, diced apple, raisins, and sweet onion.

5. Add the cooled shredded chicken. Stir in the light mayonnaise and light sour cream or Greek yogurt. Season with the ras el hanout, Madras curry powder, salt, and pepper. Mix until creamy; add a little more mayonnaise or sour cream/yogurt if you prefer it softer.

6. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour before serving.

Kitchen notes

I cut the chicken into cubes before marinating so more marinade could coat the pieces and the chicken would cook faster in the oven.

Estimated nutrition

Per ⅛ batch of chicken salad: Calories About 430; Protein About 24 g; Total fat About 21 g; Total carbs About 40 g; Fiber About 4 g; Total sugars About 25 g.

Estimate assumes three chicken breasts total about 1½ pounds and eight equal portions. This is for the chicken salad only: it includes the light mayonnaise and light sour cream mixed into the batch, but excludes bread, cheese, and the extra mayonnaise used on a sandwich. The sandwich below uses hollowed-out bread; its nutrition varies with how much bread is removed and the toppings used.

Cranberry Walnut Chicken Salad Sandwich

A one-sandwich serving idea, using one portion of the chicken salad. Tomato and lettuce are optional fresh additions.

- 2 slices cranberry walnut bread, with some soft interior scooped out
- ⅛ batch (one portion) North African-inspired curry chicken salad
- Light mayonnaise, for spreading
- 1 slice cheddar
- Sliced tomato and good lettuce, optional

1. Scoop a little of the soft interior from both bread slices, leaving the edges sturdy enough to hold the filling. Spread the bread lightly with mayonnaise. Add the chicken salad and a slice of cheddar; tuck in sliced tomato and lettuce if you have them. Close the sandwich and serve.