



Tips

- Even out the chicken breasts. If one end is built like a linebacker and the other is paper-thin, pound the thick end to an even thickness so everything finishes cooking at roughly the same time.
- Give it a few minutes to rest. Five minutes lets the juices settle and the cheesy topping firm up enough to stay on the chicken instead of immediately fleeing across the plate
- Trust the thermometer, not the clock. Chicken breasts vary wildly in thickness. Cook until the center reaches 165°F, rather than sentencing a perfectly innocent chicken breast to 12 unnecessary minutes in a 400°F oven..

Variations

- If you have time in advance, you can marinate your chicken with your favorite marinade or an Italian dressing. The acidity helps to tenderize the chicken breasts.
- I prefer the texture of whole milk ricotta, but if you're looking for a (slightly more) healthy option, you could use part-skim.
- Fresh spinach is delicious, but you can use frozen spinach and no one will be able to tell the difference!
- Add some red pepper flakes if you prefer your meal with a bit of heat.
- Garnish baked ricotta chicken with fresh basil or parsley.

Storage

Refrigerator: Store your leftover chicken in an airtight container in the refrigerator. It'll last for three to four days.

Freezer: To freeze, allow the chicken to fully cool and then wrap it tightly in plastic wrap or place it in a sealable freezer bag or casserole dish. Freeze for up to three months. Then, thaw overnight in the refrigerator before reheating.

Is baked ricotta chicken okay to make ahead as a freezer meal?

Carefully wrap the uncooked dish in a double layer of plastic or foil and freeze for up to three months. Be sure to let the ricotta chicken thaw for 24 hours in the refrigerator before putting it in your preheated oven. And use a freezer to oven safe dish.

FAQs

Can I use garlic powder or pre-minced garlic instead of fresh garlic?

To save time in a pinch, you can. However, just be aware that pre-minced garlic and garlic powder usually aren't quite as flavorful as fresh garlic cloves. I find that they lack the authentic, classic taste for which Italian cuisine is known!

Can I assemble this ahead of time and refrigerate it?

Absolutely! Prepare the recipe as directed, but, before baking, cover it with foil. You can then refrigerate the dish for a few days (depending on the "use by" date of your chicken.) Uncover the dish and bake when you're ready to eat! It's my favorite way to make meal planning on busy days even easier!