Chicken Apple Tarragon Mold

One small chicken-apple ring, about 3¾ cups (900 ml); 4 modest cold chicken-course portions · Active 35 min · Total 10 hr 30 min

Ingredients

- 2 standard ¼-ounce envelopes unflavored powdered gelatin (14 g total), of specified setting strength
- 6 tablespoons cold drinking water (90 ml)
- ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons pasteurized whole milk (210 ml)
- ¼ teaspoon dried tarragon (0.2 g)
- ¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon thick plain pasteurized Greek-style yogurt (200 g), kept cold
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice (15 ml)
- 1 small firm apple, about 4¼ oz (120 g peeled/cored edible weight), cut into ¼-inch (5 mm) dice
- 9 oz fully cooked ready-to-eat plain chicken (250 g), safely chilled, cut into ½-inch (1 cm) pieces
- ⅛ teaspoon fine salt (0.75 g)
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon neutral oil (1.25 ml), for wiping mold

Set out

Knife and clean board, Small saucepan, Mixing bowl and whisk, Small apple bowl, Scale and measuring jug, Metal ring mold of at least 1¼-liter capacity, Paper towel, Food thermometer, Cold platter, Refrigerator

Allergens

Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Check chicken’s cooked ready-to-eat state and original deadline through service; keep cold. Check mold capacity, dry and oil lightly. Peel/core apple, weigh 120 g small dice, toss with lemon juice and refrigerate. Bloom gelatin over 90 ml cold water in saucepan 5–10 minutes.

2. Add milk and tarragon to gelatin pan. Warm gently while stirring until gelatin dissolves, about 120–140°F (50–60°C); remove before boiling. Whisk 3 tablespoons cold yogurt gradually into warm mixture. Once smooth and lukewarm, whisk back into remaining cold yogurt with salt and pepper.

3. Refrigerate 15–30 minutes until lightly thickened, stirring gently. Fold in cold chicken and cold apple with all measured lemon juice. Spoon into ring, leaving at least ½ inch (1.25 cm) headroom; refrigerate excess separately.

4. Cover and refrigerate at 40°F (4°C) or below at least 8 hours until firm. Allow 10½ hours total, starting with cooked cold chicken.

5. For unmolding, set a cold plate beside the refrigerator. Dip only the outside of the metal mold in warm, not hot, water, about 100°F (38°C), for 5–8 seconds without letting water touch food. Dry the outside, loosen just the upper edge with a clean fingertip and invert onto the plate. If stuck, repeat a brief dip rather than shaking violently. Refrigerate again immediately if not serving now. Cut 4 modest cold chicken-course portions.

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Gelatin starting strength

Use food-grade unflavored powdered gelatin with a manufacturer benchmark of 7 g for about 2 cups (500 ml) plain liquid. Weigh the stated grams: envelope sizes and powder density vary. A flavored dessert packet, collagen peptides, sheet gelatin or agar is not an equal substitute.

Cold service

This is an original retro-inspired recipe, not a recovered 1960s formula. Gelatin is animal-derived; the vegetable ingredients do not make the dish vegetarian. A reliable refrigerator and the stated earlier ingredient deadlines are essential.

Ingredient labels

Read prepared chicken, dairy and gelatin labels for added ingredients and other allergens.

A useful detail

Water, milk and lemon total 315 ml, plus 200 g yogurt, 250 g chicken and 120 g apple. Fourteen grams gelatin supports roughly 900 ml of thick mixture. Lemon used on apple is the listed 15 ml, not an extra unmeasured splash.

Keep it well

Keep covered at 40°F (4°C) or below and use within 2 days of assembly AND within 3 days of the poultry's original cooking, or an earlier commercial opening/use-by deadline, whichever comes first. The overnight set counts. Keep cumulative unrefrigerated preparation and service below 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C); discard beyond those limits. Do not freeze the finished gel.