Lemon Chicken Cutlets with Green Peas

2 plates, each with 1 chicken cutlet, half the peas and half the couscous · Active 20 min · Total 40 min

Skills: Beginner with ordinary kitchen equipment

Ingredients

- 2 skinless boneless chicken breast cutlets (300 g total raw)
- 1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon quick plain couscous (100 g dry)
- 7/8 cup drinking water (210 ml), divided: 150 ml couscous and 60 ml peas
- 1 1/2 cups frozen green peas (200 g), unthawed
- 2 teaspoons olive oil (10 ml/about 9 g)
- 1 small garlic clove, minced (3 g)
- 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons lemon juice (25 ml/about 25 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g), divided
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper (0.3 g)

Set out

28 cm/11-inch skillet with lid, Rolling pin and baking paper, Separate raw-food board and clean cooked-food plate, Tongs, Food thermometer, Heatproof bowl with cover, Kettle, Fork, Kitchen scale

Allergens

Wheat in couscous; check its package for other allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. If needed, flatten the chicken between baking-paper sheets to an even 1.5 cm/5/8-inch thickness. Season with half the salt and the pepper. Keep raw-poultry equipment separate, wash hands and set out a clean plate.

2. Put dry couscous in the heatproof bowl. Bring its measured 150 ml water to a boil, or use the amount its packet requires. Pour over, cover and leave for the packet time, usually 5–10 minutes. Fluff with a fork.

3. Heat oil in the skillet over medium-high heat. Cook cutlets for about 4–5 minutes per side, adjusting the heat to avoid burning, until each reaches 165°F/74°C in its thickest part. Transfer with clean tongs to the clean plate.

4. Reduce heat to medium. Add garlic, stir for 20–30 seconds, then add the remaining 60 ml water, lemon, frozen peas and remaining salt. Scrape up brown pan residue, cover and simmer for 4–6 minutes, following any longer pea-packet instruction, until peas are hot and tender.

5. Divide couscous and peas between 2 plates. Add a chicken cutlet to each and spoon over the lemon pan juices.

A useful kitchen skill

Practice inserting a thermometer sideways into a thin cutlet. A browned exterior does not confirm that the center has reached the poultry endpoint.

A useful detail

The 40-minute total allows for pounding, water heating and a short pea finish. Thicker cutlets take longer; 165°F/74°C is the poultry endpoint. The estimate includes all couscous, peas and measured pan oil.

Keep it well

Refrigerate leftovers in shallow containers at 40°F/4°C or below within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C. Use within 3 days or the shorter ingredient deadline. Reheat only the portion needed to 165°F/74°C throughout. Add a measured splash of drinking water if the couscous has dried.