

Italian Chicken Sorrentina (Pollo alla Sorrentina) with Eggplant

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Some Italian dishes don't need much to make them special. A few good ingredients, prepared the right way, can turn into a dinner that everyone remembers. **Chicken Sorrentina** is one of those dishes.

This beautiful Southern Italian recipe brings together tender chicken, golden fried eggplant, a simple tomato sauce, and plenty of melted mozzarella and Parmesan. Everything is layered together and baked until hot, bubbling, and golden, with fresh basil added at the end. The combination is simple, but the flavor is anything but.

Pollo alla Sorrentina comes from the Sorrento area of Campania in southern Italy, and it's the kind of cooking I love most—simple, rustic, and centered around good ingredients. The fried eggplant is what makes this dish especially delicious, adding a rich, tender texture alongside the chicken and tomato sauce.

After spending 40 years in the restaurant business, I've made plenty of complicated dishes, but I've always had a soft spot for recipes like this. You don't need a long ingredient list or hours in the kitchen. You just need to take a little care with each step, and you'll end up with an Italian dinner that feels like something special.**Things to know about this Italian Chicken Sorrentina recipe**

There are a few little things that make a big difference when making Chicken Sorrentina. These are the steps I pay the most attention to.

Start with the eggplant. Fry the eggplant first, until it is golden and tender. Don't rush this step. You want the eggplant to have enough color to stand up to the tomato sauce and melted cheese. Transfer it to a plate and set it aside while you cook the chicken.

Brown, don't steam. Whether you're cooking the eggplant or chicken, give it space in the pan. If you crowd the skillet, you'll lose that beautiful browning and the flavor that comes with it. Work in batches if you need to.

Let the tomato sauce do the work. This is a simple Southern Italian dish, so I don't add a lot of unnecessary ingredients to the sauce. The tomato, garlic, olive oil, and basil should come through clearly.

Fresh mozzarella is worth using. Once it melts over the chicken and eggplant, it becomes part of the sauce and gives the finished dish that creamy, cheesy topping we all love.

Assemble it when you're ready to bake. You can cook the eggplant, chicken, and sauce earlier in the day, but I prefer assembling everything shortly before baking. That way the eggplant stays beautifully textured and the cheese melts fresh in the oven.

And serve it with bread. There is going to be tomato sauce

left on the plate. In my opinion, that sauce deserves to be soaked up with a good piece of crusty Italian bread.

More Italian Recipes You'll Love

If you love this Chicken Sorrentina, here are a few more Italian recipes from my kitchen you might enjoy:

- **Italian Stuffed Tomatoes with Rice and Potatoes**
- **Classic Italian Meatballs**
- **Italian Eggplant Caponata**
- **Chicken francese**

Kitchen Tools I Use A few simple tools make this recipe much easier:

Large heavy skillet – perfect for frying the eggplant, browning the chicken, and finishing the dish.

Tongs – especially helpful for turning the eggplant and chicken without breaking them.

Large baking dish or oven-safe skillet – for assembling and finishing the Chicken Sorrentina in the oven.

Fine grater – for freshly grated Parmesan.

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This authentic Italian Chicken Sorrentina is a comforting Southern Italian dish made with tender chicken, golden fried eggplant, simple tomato sauce, melted mozzarella, Parmesan, and fresh basil. Inspired by the flavors of Sorrento in Campania, this easy Italian dinner is full of classic Mediterranean flavor and is perfect for a family meal or special Sunday dinner.

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, about 6 oz each
- 1/2 cup All-purpose flour, for lightly dredging the chicken
- 1 medium eggplant
- 4 slices fresh mozzarella
- 2 Tbsp olive oil, plus more for the eggplant
- 2 gloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 2 cups marinara sauce or simple tomato sauce
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil
- salt and pepper to taste

1. Prepare the eggplant

Slice the eggplant lengthwise into about **¼-inch slices**. Lightly salt both sides and let them sit for about 15 minutes. Pat dry

Brush or lightly drizzle with olive oil and either **pan-**

sear for 2–3 minutes per side or roast at **425°F** for **about 15 minutes**, turning once, until tender and lightly browned.

2. **Prepare the chicken**

Place the chicken breasts between sheets of plastic wrap and gently pound them to about $\frac{1}{2}$ **inch thick**.

Season with salt and pepper and lightly dredge in flour, shaking off the excess.

Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. Sear the chicken for about **2–3 minutes per side**, just until lightly golden. Remove to a plate.

3. **Make the sauce**

Lower the heat to medium. Add the garlic and cook for about 30 seconds.

Add the white wine or chicken broth, scraping up the browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Let it reduce for 1–2 minutes.

Add the tomato sauce and oregano. Simmer for about 10 minutes.

4. **Assemble**

Return the chicken to the skillet.

Place a slice of roasted eggplant and mozzarella on each chicken breast

Sprinkle with Parmesan.

Transfer the skillet to a **400°F oven** and bake for about **8–10 minutes**, until the chicken is cooked through and

the mozzarella is melted and lightly browned.

Finish with fresh basil.



Don't make the chicken too thick. Thinly pounded chicken cooks quickly and gives you the right balance of chicken, eggplant, prosciutto, cheese, and sauce in every bite.

Main Course

Italian

Chicken Sorrentina recipe