

Catalan Chicken with Prunes and Pine Nuts

A home-style Catalan main dish pairing tender chicken with sweet prunes, toasted pine nuts, and a savory tomato-and-onion sauce. Serve it with crusty bread to catch every bit of the rich, gently sweet sauce.



Main Dish

Catalan

40 min

Total time

Medium

Difficulty

535

kcal / serving

Nutrition per serving (estimated)

Protein 34 g

Carbs 28 g

Fat 31 g

Fiber 4 g · Sugar 14 g · Sodium 480 mg

Ingredients

- 1 bone-in chicken thigh (about 200 g)
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1/4 small yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- 1 tbsp grated tomato
- 60 ml chicken stock, preferably unsalted
- 3 pitted prunes, halved
- 1 tbsp pine nuts
- 1/2 tsp chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tsp dry sherry
- Salt and black pepper
- 1 tsp chopped parsley

Substitutions

Chicken thigh – Use one bone-in chicken drumstick of similar size; allow a few extra minutes if needed for tenderness.

Pine nuts – Use chopped blanched almonds for a similarly nutty, crisp finish.

Dry sherry – Use the same amount of dry white wine.

Fresh thyme – Use a small pinch of dried thyme.

Drink pairing

A medium-bodied red wine such as a Catalan Garnacha

Its ripe fruit complements the prunes, while moderate structure stands up to the savory chicken and toasted nuts.

0% option: Sparkling water with a splash of tart cherry juice

Steps

- 1 Pat the chicken dry and season it lightly with salt and pepper.
- 2 Warm the olive oil in a small, lidded pan over medium heat. Brown the chicken on both sides, about 6–8 minutes total, then transfer it to a plate.
- 3 Add the onion to the pan and cook until soft, about 4 minutes. Stir in the garlic and grated tomato; cook for 1 minute.
- 4 Pour in the sherry and scrape up the browned bits. Add the stock, prunes, and thyme, then return the chicken to the pan.
- 5 Cover and simmer gently for 20–25 minutes, turning the chicken once, until tender and cooked through. If the sauce looks thin, uncover for the final few minutes.
- 6 Meanwhile, toast the pine nuts in a dry small pan until lightly golden. Scatter them and the parsley over the chicken before serving.

Chef's tips

- A small heavy-bottomed pan with a close-fitting lid helps the chicken braise evenly without the sauce reducing too quickly.
- The sauce should look glossy and cling lightly to a spoon; if it becomes too thick, loosen it with a splash of stock.
- Toast extra pine nuts and add them just before serving so they stay crisp against the soft prunes.

Storage

Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours in a covered container and use within 3–4 days. Reheat until steaming hot, adding a little stock if the sauce has thickened.

Frequently asked questions

Can I make this dish ahead?

Yes. Make it a day ahead and refrigerate promptly; the flavors meld nicely. Add the toasted pine nuts and parsley just before serving.

How can I tell when the chicken is done?

The meat should be tender and pull easily from the bone, with no raw-looking meat at the thickest part.

What should I serve with it?

Crusty bread, boiled potatoes, or a simple green salad make good accompaniments.