

OVEN-SEARED CHICKEN SHAWARMA WITH TOUM AND LEMON TAHINI SAUCE

PAIRED WITH 2023 MERLOT | YIELDS 6 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

2 lb boneless skinless chicken thighs
 1 lb boneless skinless chicken breast
 ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
 ½ cup olive oil
 ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
 2 Tbsp white vinegar
 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
 1 ½ tsp kosher salt
 2 tsp ground cumin
 1 tsp ground coriander
 1 tsp paprika
 ½ tsp turmeric
 ½ tsp cinnamon
 ¼ tsp allspice
 ½ tsp black pepper

TOUM (GARLIC SAUCE)

1/3 cup peeled garlic cloves
 ½ tsp kosher salt
 1 cup neutral oil, such as grapeseed
 ½ Tbsp fresh lemon juice
 1-2 tablespoons ice water, as needed

LEMON TAHINI SAUCE

½ cup tahini
 2 ½ Tbsp fresh lemon juice
 ¼ tsp kosher salt
 ¼ cup cold water
 1 small clove garlic, finely grated
 1 Tbsp olive oil
yields about 2 cups

SHAWARMA METHOD

1. Trim the chicken, if needed. Leave the pieces whole if using a vertical spike pan for shawarma. If not, cut into 1" pieces.
2. In a large bowl combine all remaining ingredients. Mix well to form a loose paste. Add the chicken and toss thoroughly until evenly coated. Cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours, preferably overnight.
3. Preheat the oven to 475°F. Stack the marinated chicken on the skewer/spike creating a compact stack or spread the 1" marinated chicken cubes tightly onto a heavy sheet pan so the pieces are slightly crowded.
4. Roast the chicken to an internal temperature of 160°F. Switch to broil and cook an additional 5–10 minutes until the edges are deeply browned and lightly charred.
5. Remove from the oven, rest briefly, then chop or slice into smaller shawarma-style pieces, mixing the caramelized edges throughout before serving.

TOUM METHOD

1. In a food processor combine garlic and salt and process until completely smooth, scraping down the sides as needed.
2. With the machine running, begin adding the oil in a very slow, steady stream. Once half the oil has been incorporated, start alternating small additions of lemon juice with the remaining oil, continuing to blend until a thick, white emulsion forms.
3. If the sauce becomes too thick or starts to break, add a small amount of ice water to stabilize it.
4. Continue blending until smooth and fluffy. Taste and adjust with additional lemon juice or salt. Chill before serving.

LEMON TAHINI METHOD

1. In a bowl whisk together tahini, lemon juice, and salt until the mixture thickens and tightens.
2. Gradually whisk in cold water until the sauce loosens into a smooth, pourable consistency.
3. Stir in garlic and olive oil, then whisk until fully incorporated.
4. Taste and adjust with additional lemon juice, water, or salt as needed. The sauce should be creamy and lightly tangy.