



## RASTA PASTA

Yields: about 16 portions (large batch, depending on portion sizes)

### Ingredients

- ¼ cup Jamaican Jerk Seasoning (the wet marinade by Grace)
- 6-8 boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 1 cup stock (chicken or veggie)
- ½ gallon heavy cream
- 1 qt half & half
- 4-6 garlic cloves (minced)
- 2-4 tbsp browning sauce
- About 6 sprigs of thyme
- 3 boxes of pasta (choose a short noodle like penne)
- 2-4 lb grated white melting cheeses (like mozzarella, Italian blends, or fontina)
- 1 lb grated parmesan
- 1 bunch green onions (sliced into rings)
- 2 hot chilies (scotch bonnet, habanero or serrano, finely mince)
- 1 large onion (diced)
- 3 colorful bell peppers (sliced or diced)
- 1 large green bell pepper (sliced or diced)
- Olive oil as needed



- Spices- season to taste with the following: jerk powder, wet jerk seasoning, sea salt, old bay seasoning, garlic powder & pepper
- Tools- 6 qt pot, a large skillet, colander, knife & cutting board, a whisk, a wooden spoon or rubber spatula, a large zip bag, a plate or sheet pan, paper towels & 2 baking dishes for the final pasta bake
- Note: You can tweak this recipe to suit your personal preferences (other great additions- sautéed mushrooms, butternut or summer squashes or even peeled & diced eggplant). You could even make it a complete meal & add in some baby spinach or callaloo. Keep in mind that this recipe is not exact. But, if you implement the methods mentioned & adjust it as needed to your liking, it will be a success!

#### Procedure (the Prep):

- In a large zip bag, add the cleaned chicken breast. To the bag, add about 1 tsp each of all the dry spices except for the salt. Add about ½ tsp of salt & about 4 tbsp of the wet jerk seasoning, the browning sauce and the leaves of two thyme sprigs
- Allow the chicken breasts to marinate in the fridge for at least 30 minutes. To avoid cross-contamination, put them on a plate or pan & store them on the lowest shelf away from ready to eat foods.
- While the meat marinates, begin the veggie prep
- Wash all the veggies & herbs
- Chop the veggies as mentioned on the ingredient list



- Boil the pasta. Since this is a large batch recipe, keep the same boiling water & simply fish the noodles out of the hot liquid using a spider (a large, slotted spoon). I began with boiling 2 boxes. Then, I boiled the last box. Nevertheless, you can certainly start with fresh boiling water in between if you do not have a spider or large slotted spoon. This recipe should make nearly one full sized steam table pan or about 2 standard lasagna pans.

- Cook the pasta slightly under done as it will finish cooking in the oven.

- Portion the pasta into the 2 pans

Brown the Chicken:

- Remove the chicken from the fridge, place it on the plate & pat them dry

- Pre heat a large skillet on medium high heat. Add a drizzle of oil to the pan & cook the chicken. Brown both sides & set it aside on a cutting board when its done

- Directly to the pan, add a bit more oil & begin to quickly sauté the peppers, onions, garlic, the remaining thyme, half of the scallions & the hot chilies. Be mindful not to overcook the peppers. Keep them colorful & slightly crisp as they will continue to cook in the sauce.

- Remove 1/3rd of the cooked pepper mix. This will be a part of the final topping to garnish

- Deglaze the pan with the stock. Scrape up all the brown bits at the bottom of the pan & let it reduce by half.

- Add the dairy to the pepper mix in the skillet

- Note: To ensure that there is enough room to make the sauce, you can make it in the same pot that the pasta was cooked in. Just be sure to rinse the pot out first and add the deglazed pepper mix to cook with the dairy.



- Add about 4 cups of the shredded white cheeses & 2 cups of parmesan to the pepper mix, stir
- Allow the sauce to cook until it thickens to coat the back of a spoon. If it has not thickened enough, melt in a little more cheese. Or, simply thicken it as needed with a bit of cornstarch slurry. Season to taste with the same spices mentioned earlier

#### Finishing Up (the Assembly & Final Cook):

- Dice the chicken into somewhat small pieces
- Reserve about 1/3rd of it to be a part of the final garnish
- Distribute the remaining chicken between the two baking pans
- Season the pasta noodles with the same spices mentioned & stir each pan of noodles around until thoroughly mixed
- Pour the sauce over both noodle pans. If your skillet is an oven safe pan, it can be used in place of one of the baking dishes
- Top each Rasta pasta bake with the remaining chicken, a sprinkle of the pre-cooked pepper blend, a bit more of the green onions.
- Top them with the remaining cheeses. Note: any nice melting cheese varieties will do. In this recipe, I used mozzarella & parmesan.
- Allow one pan to fully cool. It can be stored away for a quick premade meal for another day! Just be sure to cool it to room temperature within the first 2 hours. Then wrap it, date it & refrigerate it for later. Cover it with parchment paper first, then cover it with foil. This will prevent the cheese from sticking to the top of the foil during the cooking process. From cold, this may take anywhere from 1 to 2 hours to bake. Bake it at 350°F & keep it covered 2/3rds of the way. Uncover it to brown up at the end.
- To finish one pan immediately, preheat your oven to 375°F.
- As everything is cooked, if baking this directly after assembly, it should reheat in about 15 minutes.
- Once hot & bubbly, garnish it with the remaining scallions & enjoy