

BBQ Chicken Thigh Quesadilla: Smoky Mexican Folded Tortilla

Tender shredded meat and melted cheese toasted in a crisp tortilla



PREP
15 min

COOK
15 min

TOTAL
36 min

SERVES
4 servings

CALORIES
400 kcal

Ingredients

- 1 lb boneless skin-less chicken thighs, trimmed
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup low-sugar BBQ sauce
- 1 cup shredded Mexican-blend cheese
- 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh cilantro, chopped
- 4 large 10-inch flour tortillas
- 1 tbsp butter, melted
- 1/2 cup canned black beans, rinsed (optional)

Instructions

1. Season the chicken: Season the chicken thighs with smoked paprika, salt, and pepper. Drizzle with olive oil and toss until evenly coated. This ensures the spices adhere and the meat browns evenly.
2. Sear the meat: Sear the thighs in a hot, lightly oiled skillet over medium-high heat for 6-7 min per side. Ensure the internal temperature reaches 165°F (74°C) for safety. Remove the meat and let it rest for 5 min to lock in the juices before shredding with two forks.
3. Prepare the filling: Return the shredded chicken to a clean skillet. Toss it with 1/2 cup BBQ sauce and 1/2 cup black beans if using. Cook for 1-2 min to warm the mixture through.

4. Assemble the tortillas: Lay a tortilla flat on a clean surface. Spread a thin layer of the smoky chicken mix over the centre. Sprinkle 1/4 cup cheese, chopped red onion, and cilantro over the meat.
5. Fold and press: Fold the tortilla over the filling. Press lightly to keep the ingredients together. This prevents the filling from sliding out during the searing process.
6. Sear the quesadilla: Heat the skillet over medium heat and use non-stick spray or 1 tsp butter. Place the folded tortilla in the pan and cook 3-4 min per side. Press gently with a spatula until the tortilla is golden brown and the cheese is melted.
7. Rest and slice: Transfer the finished quesadilla to a cutting board. Let it rest for 1 min so the cheese sets. Slice into wedges with a sharp knife for clean edges.

Notes

How it differs from the traditional method Using chicken thighs instead of breast ensures the meat remains succulent after searing and shredding. Thighs withstand the higher heat of the skillet without drying out. Choose breast meat only if you require a leaner protein, but accept a firmer texture in the final filling.

Storing and reheating Store assembled, uncooked quesadillas in a freezer bag for 2 weeks. Reheat them in a preheated oven at 190 C (375 F) for 10 minutes. This method preserves the crispness of the tortilla and ensures the cheese melts evenly without becoming soggy from the BBQ sauce.