

Chicken Breast with Lavender

Petto di Pollo alla Lavanda

The pancetta and the chicken skin seal in the meat's juiciness, while the exterior is crisp and fragrant. The lavender bread crumb coating tantalizes the senses.

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless chicken breasts, skin on
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 12 thin slices pancetta
- 2 tablespoons (1 fl. oz. / 30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup (125 g) bread crumbs
- 2 1/2 tablespoons lavender, plus more or garnish
- 1 cup (8 fl. oz. / 240 ml) homemade chicken broth (see page xi) or canned low-sodium broth

Heat the oven to 400°F (200°C).

Season the chicken breasts with salt and pepper. Arrange 3 slices of pancetta on the bottom side of each chicken breast and tie with kitchen string. In a large ovenproof skillet, over medium-high heat, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil and sear the chicken breasts on both sides, until the skin side is golden and the pancetta side is somewhat crispy, about 4 minutes per side. Remove chicken breasts from the pan, discard the kitchen string, and set chicken aside.

Briefly pulse together the bread crumbs and the lavender in a small food processor. Lightly coat the chicken breasts with the bread crumb mixture.

Return the chicken to the skillet and put in the oven until the chicken is cooked through, about 20 minutes or until an instant thermometer registers 165°F (74°C). Place the chicken on a serving platter.

Prepare a pan sauce: Place the skillet over medium-high heat and add the chicken stock. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and let simmer for about 5 minutes, until reduced by half. Drizzle the chicken with the sauce and garnish with lavender to serve.

Serves 4