**Asian Chicken with Broccoli and Rice**

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| **Ingredients:**1 cup uncooked white rice1/2 head of fresh broccoli2 large, thick boneless chicken breastsadditional chicken/vegetable/beef stock (for rice preparation)1 lime (optional)for the sauce:2 cups water (or 2 cups of chicken, vegetable of beef stock) <--TheLadyinRed recommends using chicken or vegetable stock for a "lighter flavor"1 chicken/vegetable/beef bouillon cube (ONLY if using water)2 Tbsp. cornstarch1 cup thinly sliced bell peppers (approximately 2 bell peppers) (any colors will do, but a combination of red, yellow, and orange looks appetizing)1 cup thinly sliced onion (approximately 1 large onion)2 garlic cloves (minced)1 Tbsp. white, white wine, or rice wine vinegar (TheLadyinRed found out that white wine vinegar works well, too.)1/2 tsp. sesame oil1/2 tsp. powdered ginger or 1 tsp. grated fresh ginger (TheLadyinRed recommends using fresh ginger if you can. It adds that authentic Asian "zing" in the aftertaste of every bite.)1/2 tsp. soy sauce3 Tbsp. oyster sauce <-- yes, this is in a regular supermarket!  Just ask!  It's probably in the Asian aisle or with the various bottled sauces. | **Special Notes:**Serves 4If you like it spicy, add 1/8 - 1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes to the sauce while it's simmering.Leftovers last for up to 3 days in the refrigerator.Other sauce additions can include:  water chestnuts, baby corn, and mushrooms.  The addition of mushrooms is only recommended if using a beef stock/bouillon base to match the earthiness of the dish.A pescetarian option would be to use vegetable stock, leave out the chicken, and substitute an equal portion of broccoli.  Sorry - but the oyster sauce is essential to the flavor, so you really can't vegetarian this out completely. |

**Instructions:**

1.  If you are using bouillon, microwave 2 cups of water for 3 minutes with the cube or packet of bouillon, and then mix well.  Add this to a large, deep pan on the stove.

If you are using stock, heat 2 cups of stock in a large, deep pan on the stove until boiling.

2.  Add 2 Tbsp. cornstarch and mix until combined, over low heat - like super low, simmering style heat. :)  You will see the magic happen as you stir the cornstarch into the broth.  The "gravy" will transform itself into a semi-translucent sauce.

3. The sauce will need to simmer while the rest of the dish is prepared.  Add all of the ingredients to the sauce, except for the rice, broccoli and chicken.  This means those onions, peppers, garlic and other sauce components are going to dive right in the pot.  This is why your pot needs to be large.  The sauce flavor will mature as it's simmering, with the peppers infusing it.

(If you want to add anything additional - water chestnuts, baby corn, or mushrooms to the sauce - this is the time to do it.  It's optional.  Chef Jeff sticks to the basic sauce.  TheLadyinRed breaks the rules, as usual. :) )

4.  Prepare the rice as per package directions, except instead of water, use the chicken/vegetable/beef stock in lieu of water.  This infuses the rice with flavor and makes it go from bland to oh-so-yum!

5.  In a large saucepan, bring 3/4 of a pot of water to a boil.

6.  While the water is coming to a boil, chop the broccoli into bite size pieces.

7.  Slice the boneless, skinless chicken breasts into strips, as if you were making chicken fingers.  You want long slices, about 1 1/2 inches wide.  This step is important so the chicken does not overcook and become dry.

8.  Once the water is rapidly boiling, add the broccoli and chicken at the same time.  Cover the pot, remove it from the heat, and set it aside for 20 minutes.  (We're not trying to make chicken-broccoli soup here; we just want to cook everything so the broccoli isn't mush and the chicken isn't dried out.)

9.  Stir the sauce every few minutes as it thickens.  If you are finding that your sauce is just too darn thick, or it looks like you've got more veggies than sauce, add 1/4 cup of water to it to thin it out a bit.

10.  After 20 minutes, drain the chicken and broccoli into a colander.  Remove the chicken and cut it into 1" pieces.

11.  Put 1/2 cup of rice on each plate.  Arrange some broccoli and chicken over the rice.

12.  Generously spoon some sauce over the plate.  Cut a lime into wedges (if using); and serve along side.   Fresh squeezed lime adds a nice tart accompaniment.