

## Panko-Coated Chicken Breasts with Tarragon and Lime

This recipe has become a regular in our cooking repertoire. Using three coatings for the chicken is a classic technique. By dipping the chicken breasts first in flour, the egg has something to hold on to. The egg coating provides additional moisture and flavor and holds the bread crumbs, which offer a crusty texture. If you get organized at the outset by assembling two baking sheets, two plates for the flour and bread crumbs, and a bowl for the eggs, then you just have to coat and sauté the chicken.

### Ingredients

- 6 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, trimmed of fat
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups panko (Japanese bread crumbs)
- 1 teaspoon kosher or sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 cup minced fresh tarragon or 2 tablespoons dried tarragon leaves
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more as needed
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more as needed
- 2 limes, cut into wedges, for garnish

Place a long piece of plastic wrap on a work surface. Set the chicken breasts, about 3 inches apart, on the plastic, then cover with another piece of plastic wrap. Using a flat (nonserrated) meat pounder or bottom of a small saucepan, pound the chicken so it is uniformly thin, without tearing it.

Organize the 3 coatings. Place the flour on a dinner plate. In a shallow, wide bowl, beat the eggs together; set next to the flour. Combine the panko, salt, pepper, sugar, and tarragon on another plate and set next to eggs. Have ready 2 baking sheets. Lightly coat each chicken breast first with flour, shaking off excess. Then dip in egg and let excess drain off. Finally, coat lightly, but completely, with the crumb mixture. Arrange on the baking sheets until ready to sauté. (This may be done up to 6 hours in advance. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to cook.)

Heat a heavy, 12-inch frying pan (preferably cast iron) over medium-high heat, add oil and butter, and tilt to coat the pan. (If sautéing the chicken in 2 batches, preheat the oven to 200°F.) Add the chicken to the pan without crowding and sauté until the panko coating looks crisp and golden, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Sauté the second batch, adding additional oil and butter, if needed. Keep the first batch warm while sautéing the second batch. Serve hot, garnished with lime wedges.

Serves 6

