

Just South of Buffalo Wings – Comfort du Jour

I've found the secret to crispy but juicy Buffalo-ish chicken wings, without the fat of deep frying and without the expense and mess of an air fryer. The technique involves *steaming* the wings to render some of the fat, and then oven roasting them to perfection before tossing them in your favorite sauce.

I've named these "Just South of Buffalo Wings" because that's where I'm from, and also because I've added a generous blast of black pepper to the traditional Frank's RedHot sauce, and a little bit of brown sugar to balance that crazy-good bite.

INGREDIENTS

Up to 2 lbs. fresh chicken wings* (see notes)
1/2 cup Frank's Original RedHot sauce*
1/4 stick (2 Tbsp.) salted butter
3 Tbsp. brown sugar
1 Tbsp. coconut aminos*
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
2 or 3 shakes garlic powder
1/2 tsp. black pepper

*NOTES

For best results, use fresh (never frozen) wings for this recipe. If they are already split into drumettes and flat pieces, that's fine. But it's also OK if they are still whole pieces. I've done them both ways, and the only adjustment you may need is additional roasting time on the whole ones.

There are many newer versions of Frank's RedHot sauce available today. Get the one that is labeled as the "original."

Coconut aminos provide depth of savory flavor to this sauce. It's a dark-colored, liquid sauce, similar to soy sauce but with a touch of sweet and lower in sodium. It is made from the fermented sap of coconut trees, but doesn't taste at all like coconut. You can find them in the same aisle, or substitute in this recipe with half as much lite soy sauce.

INSTRUCTIONS

[Adapted from Alton Brown's recipe](#) (Food Network)

1. Bring a couple inches of water to a boil in a medium saucepan fitted with a steamer basket and tight-fitting lid. Line a rimmed baking sheet with paper towels and place a cooling rack over the towels.
2. Add the chicken wings to the steamer basket, working in as many as will fit at a time. Steam the wings for 10 minutes, then arrange them on the cooling rack. Repeat with remaining wings; cool a few minutes then cover the baking sheet with foil and transfer the wings to the refrigerator until they are fully chilled, about an hour. This step is important for crisping the skin later.
3. Preheat oven to 425° F. Remove the chilled wings from the fridge.

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4. Combine all the sauce ingredients in a small saucepan and heat over medium-low for several minutes, until the sauce is fully blended and slightly thickened. Turn off the burner and cover to keep the sauce warm.
5. Roast the wings for 40 minutes, turning them once after half the time. The skin should be crispy and golden brown.
6. Transfer the wings in batches to a large sealable bowl. Pour enough sauce to coat the wings. Cover the bowl and gently shake to thoroughly coat the wings. Put the wings back into the oven for about 8 minutes to “seal the deal” and bake the sauce into the wings.
7. Serve with crunchy celery sticks and chunky bleu cheese dressing.

Number of servings varies, based on weight of the chicken wings. Plan for 1/2 pound chicken wings per person. The sauce ingredients listed here are good for up to two pounds.