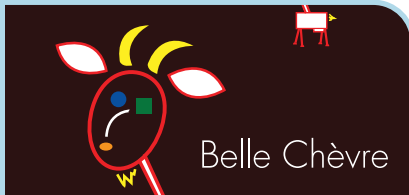


Goat Cheese and Olive-Stuffed Chicken Breasts



Ingredients:

6 Kalamata or other brine-cured black olives
1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 teaspoon vegetable oil

1 ounce soft mild goat cheese (about 2 tablespoons)
2 boneless chicken breast halves with skin

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 300°F. Pit and thinly slice olives. In a small bowl stir together olives, goat cheese, thyme, and salt and pepper to taste until combined well. Pat chicken dry and season with salt and pepper.

To form a pocket in chicken for filling:

Put a chicken breast half on a cutting board and, beginning in middle of 1 side of breast half, horizontally insert a sharp thin knife three fourths of the way through center, moving knife in a fanning motion to create a pocket. Form pocket in remaining breast half in same manner. Divide filling between pockets and spread evenly with a finger. Pat chicken dry and season with salt and pepper. In a small heavy ovenproof skillet heat oil over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking and brown chicken, skin sides down, about 2 minutes. Turn chicken over and brown about 2 minutes more. Transfer skillet to middle of oven and bake chicken until cooked through, about 15 minutes. Serves 2.