Brined Breasts with a Thin Crumb

Boneless breasts sit in a short brine, then take a light breadcrumb coat instead of a heavy crust. They cook whole, in one layer, until the center is safely done.

SERVES	HANDS-ON	COOK	TOTAL	SETTING
4	15 min	11 min	41 min	400 F (204 C)

Wait is a 10-minute brine plus a 5-minute rest after cooking. Both happen off the heat. Two batches add about 11 minutes of cooking.

INGREDIENTS

Brine

- 4 cups (960 ml) water
- 2 tablespoons (36 g) sea salt, for the brine
- 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts, 7 oz (198 g) each
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1/3 cup (37 g) gluten-free breadcrumbs labeled gluten-free
- 1/2 tsp (0.5 g) dried oregano labeled gluten-free
- 1/2 tsp (1 g) paprika labeled gluten-free
- 3/4 tsp (2 g) garlic powder labeled gluten-free
- 3/4 tsp (4.5 g) sea salt
- 1/2 tsp (1 g) black pepper labeled gluten-free
- Cooking spray labeled gluten-free

> **Gluten-free:** Written so a reader with celiac disease can cook it when every packaged ingredient is one whose label says gluten-free. Read the package you actually buy. This page does not promise a meal with zero gluten.

METHOD

1. Dissolve the brine salt in the water, submerge the breasts, and wait 10 minutes. Rinse them and blot them dry.
2. Heat the fryer to 400 F (204 C). Mix the breadcrumbs with the oregano, paprika, garlic powder, the 3/4 teaspoon of sea salt, and the pepper.
3. Rub the breasts with the oil, press on a thin coat of the crumbs, and mist them with cooking spray.
4. Set the breasts in one layer with space between them, in two batches if your basket is small. Cook 6 minutes, turn each breast, and cook about 5 minutes more.
5. The center of the thickest breast must read 165 F (74 C). Baskets differ by model, so start checking a minute or two early if the pieces are slim.
6. Rest 5 minutes, loosely covered, then slice.

NOTES

- Rinse the brine off. The 3/4 teaspoon of salt in the crumb is the salt you taste, and a salty crust means the brine stayed on.
- This crumb is 1/3 cup for four breasts. It browns and covers the meat. It does not make a thick shell.
- Thaw frozen breasts in the refrigerator before the brine. Do not put ice-hard chicken in the basket.