

CORNISH HENS – SHEET PAN DINNER

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Follow our complete, step-by-step, recipe to make this delicious sheet pan dinner featuring Cornish Hens. We've teamed up with OXO Good Grips for a look at more of their great tools for your kitchen. You just need one pan to make a complete meal.

Cornish Hens Recipe

Full Disclosure: *This recipe is sponsored by OXO Good Grips. They provided me with several new tools to test and review in exchange for my participation. All comments are my own.*

Have you ever tried a Cornish Hen? Well, if not, let me just go ahead and tell you, "It tastes like chicken." There, how's that? Smile.

I must admit, to the best of my knowledge I'd never had a Cornish Hen until I finished this recipe. I don't know why, I just hadn't. But, I will not overlook them any longer. Each bird is a perfect serving for a "manly" meal. Maybe even two servings.

In talking with a friend last year after Thanksgiving, I asked him if he enjoyed some turkey for the holiday. He replied that he hadn't and proceeded to tell me that instead of a turkey, his wife would always cook two Cornish Hens, one for him, one for her. They just didn't need a big old turkey for the two of them.

That peaked my curiosity and I've been thinking about trying them for myself ever since.

A couple of weeks ago, I finally picked up a package at the supermarket, brought them home and placed them back in the freezer. You'll probably find them in the freezer section at your local market.

A few days later, our friends over at **OXO Good Grips** invited me to participate in a "Sheet Pan with a Plan" promotion they were offering. Well, I love working with OXO and I'm always eager to see what new products they are offering.

When I read about what they were looking for, I knew right then what to do with the Cornish Hens in the freezer. How's that for good timing?

Cornish Hens are actually just young boiler chickens, so yes, they do taste like chicken. Smile. And, when you combine a couple of them on a sheet pan with some of your favorite vegetables, you can roast up a complete ONE PAN meal in hardly any time at all. How cool is that?

The recipe is simple, and I'll show you the new tools that OXO sent for testing and review. So, if you're ready to cook up a quick and easy sheet pan dinner, let's head to the kitchen, and... Let's Get Cooking!

Cornish Hens – Sheet Pan Dinners recipe: You'll need these ingredients.

The choice of vegetables you cook with your Cornish Hens is entirely up to you. I'm just using these as a suggestion, and I didn't even use all of the vegetables pictured to complete this meal.

Opening a box of new kitchen tools from OXO is about as good as Christmas. These are the new items that OXO provided me with to complete this one sheet pan meal. Let's take a closer look and then we'll get into how to prepare the full recipe.

The images above are courtesy of OXO Good Grips and give you a better idea of what we'll be working with. I'm always excited to add new products from OXO to my collection because of the quality they put into each and every product. If you'd like to learn more about any or all of them. Click a link below.

- **Chef's Precision Digital Instant Read Thermometer**: The Instant Read Thermometer provides quick, accurate measurements for cooked meat. The pivoting head allows reading temperature from any angle.
- **Silicone Roasting Rack**: elevates food above fat and liquid for healthier cooking and allows air to circulate around food for faster, more even roasting.
- **Flavor Injector**: inject marinades and other flavorings into meat for delicious flavor and juiciness. Two needles for thick and thin marinades store inside injector tube when not in use.
- **Good Gravy Fat Separator**: Easily separates the fat for healthier gravies, soups and sauces
- **Non-Stick Pro Half Sheet Jelly Roll Pan**: Square-rolled edges add reinforcement for structure, strength and durability

Wash your vegetables.

Rinse your vegetables under cool running water as needed.

Set them aside to drain while we prepare the Cornish Hens.

As mentioned, these are just the vegetables that I used, you might prefer some different ones. I always encourage you to take a recipe and make it your own. You know best what you or your family likes or dislikes, so select vegetables that will work best for you.

These were frozen Cornish Hens that I thawed in the refrigerator prior to starting to complete this meal. Most of what I've seen generally come with two of them packaged together but that may be different in your area.

These are sometimes called Cornish Game Hens, or you might find a Rock Cornish Game Hen.

It's called a "hen" but can be either male or female. These are young broiler chickens that grow to about 28 to 30 days old compared to most chickens that are grown to about 42 days or longer.

Cornish Hens typically weigh less than 2lbs each.

You'll need to give them a good rinse under cold running water. Rinse them inside and out, removing any pin feathers that might be left on the bird.

Some come with the giblets inside, much like you'd find inside a turkey, but the two I have were sold without them.

Pat them dry with a paper towel.

You can also truss the hens if you'd like. That step is optional.

I decided to inject one of the hens with some **[NC Eastern Style Vinegar Based BBQ Sauce](#)**.

Since I hadn't had a Cornish Hen before, I only did one so I could still see what it would normally taste like.

I love that the OXO Flavor Injector comes with two different sizes of needles, one for thin marinades and another for thicker marinades. Injecting the birds will add moistness and more flavor. Use a homemade marinade or purchase a favorite from your grocer. Something as simple as melted butter will work great.

Try not to pierce the skin when doing this. Find an exposed part in the breast, legs and thighs to inject a bit of your marinade.

The Flavor Injector made this part super easy and both needles store inside the unit when not in use.

I placed the two Silicone Roasting Racks on the sheet pan, then placed the hens on top, one on each rack. You can use these separately as pictured, or place them close enough together to use them as one. You can even stack them on top of each other to raise the meat up higher.

The racks keep the meat up above the fat and liquid for healthier cooking and its design allows air to circulate around the meat for faster and more even cooking. They turned out to be just a perfect rack to hold one hen.

I'm already the proud owner of the OXO Pizza Pan, and their Muffin Pan, so I know this sheet pan is a quality made product that will serve me well.

Season the hens as desired.

I used a little Salt, Black Pepper, and some Smoked Paprika on these. Garlic Powder would be good, maybe some onion powder. Lots of choices depending on the flavor you desire to achieve.

Please note that I also placed two Sweet Potatoes on the sheet pan as well. Since these will take about an hour to bake, I wanted them to go in the oven at the same time as the birds.

I also drizzled a little Olive Oil over the birds. Now, let's get them in the oven.

Place the sheet pan in your preheated oven that should be set to 350F degrees.

The hens will need an hour or longer to roast in the oven, but the vegetables I've chosen will not need that much time. We're giving the hens a "head start" on the cooking process. Smile.

While the hens are getting started in the oven, go ahead and slice your vegetables into large chunks as desired. The squash and zucchini will shrink up a bit as they cook, so even larger pieces become bite sized when roasted.

I probably should have cut these really large carrots into smaller pieces though. We'll see.

I was tossing the chunks into a large bowl as I went. I figured as long as they were here, I might as well go ahead and drizzle some Olive Oil on them as well. Afterwards, I used a large spoon to toss them around to make sure they were pretty well coated in oil.

You could certainly just place them on the sheet pan and drizzle them a bit with Olive Oil later.

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After the hens had roasted in the oven for 30 minutes, I removed the pan and spread the sliced vegetables all around the pan. Keep them in a single layer but fill the pan up. This is also a good time to sprinkle the vegetables with a little salt and pepper if you'd like.

As you might can see, I stacked some of the vegetables right up next to the birds on the silicone racks. I also melted some butter in the microwave and brushed it on the Cornish Hens before placing the sheet pan back in the oven. There was a little oil in the pan, but not enough to baste the birds with.

Place the sheet pan back into the oven and let it all cook until done. It took me an hour and 15 minutes to completely roast the Cornish Hens, so this gave me about 45 minutes for the vegetables to cook.

The packaging on these hens said they should be cooked to an internal temperature of 180F degrees. Most sources say poultry is done at 165F degrees so I'm not sure what the difference here might be.

One of the best kitchen tools you'll have for cooking any type of meat is a digital thermometer. I highly suggest you add one to your collection of kitchen tools, and this OXO brand Chef's Precision Digital Instant Read Thermometer would be a great choice. It's large dial makes it easy to see the temperature of your cooked meats and it displays in either Fahrenheit or Celsius by just a simple

button on the back.

The head swivels so you can easily get a good reading and it shuts off automatically in case you fail to cut it off to preserve battery life. It also comes with a case that has a printed guide on the outside to help you remember what temperature certain meats should be cooked in order to be safe.

Once you remove the pan from the oven, let the birds rest for about 10 minutes prior to serving.

Everything here turned out perfect except for the carrots. I would probably use baby carrots the next time, or perhaps I should have added the carrots when I first placed the pan in the oven. The birds were just right, and the sweet potatoes were nicely baked. What do you think? Look good enough to eat?

Enjoy!

Sheet pan dinners are a wonderful way to prepare a meal quickly and easily. While we didn't get everything in the oven at one time, it was a simple matter to add the vegetables later into the roasting cycle so we didn't overcook them. I do hope you'll consider giving our recipe a try and I look forward to reading your Comments in the section below.