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Oven "Fried" Chicken Strips with Yogurt Ranch Dip

Prep time: 60 minutes

Servings: 4

Who's ready for next-generation chicken strips? We are! These tender, crisp and naturally delicious chicken strips are your answer to those pre-packaged frozen, chicken strips loaded with preservatives and other not-so-wholesome ingredients that you can't pronounce and certainly don't want in your kids' regular diets. Ours are oven "fried" which reduces the amount of fat without sacrificing crunch or kid-friendly flavor. Love to dip your fingers? Try our Ranch Dressing recipe too. It's tasty dip-able goodness made with our tangy yogurt and garden-fresh herbs.

Ingredients

Chicken Strips

3 to 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts (about 2 pounds), sliced into 12 strips

2 cups Green Valley Creamery Lactose-Free Plain Kefir (lowfat or whole milk)

1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour

2 eggs

2 cups plain or seasoned breadcrumbs (we used: 1 1/2 cups plain breadcrumbs and 1/2 cup panko bread crumbs)

1 tsp. salt

Canola or olive oil cooking oil spray

Ranch Dip

1 (8 oz.) container Green Valley Creamery Lactose-Free Plain Yogurt (lowfat or whole milk)

1/4 cup mayonnaise

1/2 tsp. garlic powder

1/2 tsp. onion powder

1/4 cup finely chopped flat leaf parsley

2 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh chives

1 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh dill

1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

Salt to taste

Instructions

For chicken strips:

1. Place chicken strips in a bowl with the kefir, cover and refrigerate for at least one hour, up to eight hours.
2. Whisk together the dressing ingredients, adjust seasonings to taste and refrigerate until ready to serve.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. Remove chicken from kefir and pat dry.
5. Place flour, eggs and breadcrumbs in separate bowls, set up in an assembly line with the baking sheet at the end. Stir the salt into the breadcrumbs and whisk the eggs.
6. Dip the chicken in the flour and shake off any excess. Dip into the eggs and roll in the breadcrumbs. Be sure to coat the chicken evenly at each step.
7. Place on baking sheet and repeat until all the chicken is coated. Place baking sheet in the freezer or refrigerator 5 to 10 minutes.
8. Spray with cooking oil spray and bake 30 to 35 minutes. Every 10 minutes, turn the chicken over and spray lightly with cooking spray to ensure crispy chicken strips.

For ranch dip:

Tip: For busy families, double the recipe and pack your freezer with healthful chicken strips for quick-n-easy weeknight dinners. Double the recipe and par bake the chicken strips for about 12 minutes. Allow the strips to cool, then wrap in parchment or wax paper and place in a zip top bag and freeze until ready to enjoy. To reheat: Place on a baking sheet, spray with cooking spray and bake at 350°F for 25 minutes, turning once.

Tip: Make gluten-free chicken strips by substituting rice flour for the wheat flour and oatmeal, pulsed in the blender to create a finer crumb, for the breadcrumbs.

Tip: Make vegetarian by substituting zucchini spears for the chicken and omit Worcestershire sauce in the ranch dip.