

FAMILY RECIPES

Great Dishes From Local Chefs | By Christina Elston



Performance Chef Tyrone Hall hard at work in the L.A. Dodgers kitchen.

PHOTO BY JON SOOHO/L.A. DODGERS

Sticky Chicken Dodgers Style

As our L.A. Dodgers play their way through the season, the team has coaches for almost every aspect of the game, from pitching, hitting and the bases to the bullpen and the bench.

There are also strength and conditioning coaches, athletic trainers and physical therapists on staff. With all this focus on performance, it should come as no surprise that the team also has a performance chef to feed its many stomachs.

Tyrone Hall has had the job for three years now, bringing together his nutrition knowledge (he has a master's degree in public health from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) and culinary talents to cater to the players' tastes and dietary needs. "My job in this kitchen is to make sure that we

always have food that helps players play at optimal levels," he says. This might mean extra protein for a player recovering from an injury, higher fat for a player whose training burns lots of calories and plenty of veggies for all because of their high nutrient content.

But in the Dodgers' dining room, food is also a team-building opportunity. "That's something we always try to emphasize here," says Hall, "that food has a social component as well, and it's more than just sustenance. It's nice when we see people sitting down together, having a meal and not necessarily just talking shop about baseball, but also enjoying each other's company. I think that's important."

Hall learned this lesson – and a fair amount about cooking and eating – growing up in North Carolina, where he spent many days after school in the

kitchen with his grandmother. "She comes from a big Italian family, so food is a very important aspect of their gatherings," he says. His father was also a good home cook who loved to experiment and try new things.

For the team, pizza days and sushi Fridays generate lots of excitement. Vegetables – maybe not unlike in your own home – not so much. "Vegetables, we always have to work the magic," Hall says. Tossing a little jalapeno bacon with the Brussels sprouts, for instance, does the trick.

The key to this recipe, which is definitely a hit with the team, is its use of chicken thighs. "Chicken thighs are very forgiving," Hall says. "You can walk away from chicken thighs for a few minutes and even if you forget about them, more likely than not they're still good. Chicken breasts, if you forget about them for one minute, you end up with cardboard." That being said, you can use chicken breasts in the recipe if you're careful not to overcook them.

The flavor and tenderness of the chicken and the tasty sauce make this a family favorite. "The sweetness and the saltiness paired with the texture of the chicken works very well," Hall says. "And it's good for leftovers."

To make this dish – or anything you're cooking – simpler and more fun, Hall recommends taking time to prep before you cook. This means checking to make sure you have all the ingredients you'll need and handling all the measuring and chopping first. "Prepping out ahead of time usually makes cooking a lot simpler and a lot less stressful," Hall says.

Pair the chicken with some rice and roasted or braised green beans, and you'll have a dinner your home team will love.





Sticky Chicken from Dodgers Chef Tyrone Hall

Serves 4

- 8 skin-on bone-in chicken thighs
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon granulated garlic
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- ¼ cup olive oil, divided
- 1 medium onion, diced fine
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup apple juice
- 1 ½ cups chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, optional

Gather all ingredients, cooking utensils and cookware.

Combine the chicken, salt, pepper, granulated garlic, paprika, cayenne and 1 tablespoon brown sugar and allow the chicken to marinate for 2-4 hours, covered, in the refrigerator.

Remove the chicken from the refrigerator and heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil to the pan.

When the oil is hot enough it shimmers, add the chicken thighs skin side down. Reduce heat to medium and allow the chicken to sear for 5 minutes undisturbed. Flip the thighs over and allow to cook for 5 minutes more undisturbed.

Remove the chicken from the pan and place on a plate to rest.

Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil to the pan, along with the diced onion. Sauté for 1 minute.

Add the garlic and sauté for 30 seconds.

Add the water to the pan and scrape up any brown bits, then add the apple juice, stock, tomato paste, crushed red pepper (if using) and remaining brown sugar and bring to a boil. Return the chicken to the pan, reduce the heat to low and simmer, uncovered, for 15-20 minutes or until the sauce is reduced by half and the chicken reaches 165 degrees when an instant-read thermometer is inserted in the thickest part.

Turn off the heat and allow the chicken to rest for 5 minutes. Serve, topping chicken with remaining sauce. ♦

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