

# NerdGuy Cooks

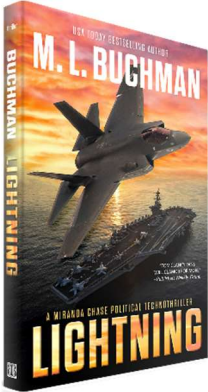
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Buchman Bookworks

## Chicken Piccata



*Lightning*

Miranda  
Chase #10

*“They burned one of my ships with an orbital laser?” President Roy Cole sounded... Miranda reached for her notebook.*

*“Aghast,” Andi whispered.*

*“Oh,” Miranda nodded as the waiter served a course of chicken in lemon sauce with asparagus and fingerling potatoes. Then she shook her head. “The ship was only burned a little. I wouldn’t have noticed if I hadn’t seen the setting sun reflecting differently off the exposed section of the landing runway.”*

*“Then what happened to the ship?”*

*“Oh, that was completely because of the pilot’s actions. I thought that was clear. I inspected his canopy, helmet, flightsuit, and seat. Then I had the medical staff rush an autopsy. I don’t think they were pleased.”*

*She’d had to have Susan go to the captain and order it. It was far more important than broken bones and people’s various remaining burns remaining from the firefight. All of the critical patients had already been treated.*

*“They’re asking what you found out, Miranda.” Andi whispered.*

*“Oh. He’d been cooked.”*

*Then she looked around the table, then whispered to Andi, “Why am I the only one still eating?”*

*NOTE: I love making this dish. It’s one of my signature dishes. It’s incredibly simple, quite healthy, and punchy with flavor. My family requests it often. It creates a lush and tangy sauce, so it goes great with rice. Steamed red cabbage or broccoli, or a quick sauté of veggies with a light drizzle of balsamic vinegar will make the colors really pop on the plate.*

Active time: 30 minutes / Total time: 30 minutes

Serves 4 (plus great leftovers)

### Ingredients for Chicken

- 6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 small lemons
- salt and pepper
- 1/2 c. all-purpose flour

## Ingredients to Cook

- 4 Tbsp. vegetable oil (olive oil will scorch)
- 1 largish shallot, sliced thin, or
- 1 clove garlic, minced (about 1 tsp.)
- 1 c. chicken stock or broth

## Ingredients to Finish

- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 Tbsp. fresh parsley, minced (2 tsp. dried works in a pinch, but add one step earlier to hydrate it)

## Prep Instructions

1. Slice a lemon in half the long way, pole to pole. Trim off the ends.
2. Juice half, then slice the skin 1/8" – 1/4" thick.
3. Juice the other half and the whole second lemon.
4. Slice the chicken into cutlets.
  - a. Remove the cutlet from the bottom of the breast, if any.
  - b. Place the breast with the fat end toward your non-knife hand.
  - c. Starting 3" back, slice 1/2" thick toward the fat end. Do *not* cut through. Instead, flop the cut part over.
  - d. Start 1/2" behind that, slice 1/2" thick toward the fat end. Cut through (watch your fingers).
  - e. You should end up with a nice large piece of chicken, perhaps the size of your hand, and 1/2" thick.
  - f. Repeat for all of the chicken. (At the thin end, just fake it, it's not critical, but no thicker than 1/2".)
5. Sprinkle both sides of the cutlets generously with salt and pepper.
6. Put the flour into a shallow dish or plate.
7. Flop each cutlet in the flour, making sure no chicken remains unfloored. Shake off the excess. Set aside on another plate.

## Cook the Chicken

8. Put oven rack at lower-middle position, put a large heatproof plate on the rack. Heat oven to lowest setting.
9. Heat 2 Tbsp. oil over med-high heat in large heavy-bottomed skillet until it shimmers.
10. Lay down as much chicken as will fit without overlapping. You'll have to cook in batches, adding another 1-2 Tbsp. of oil as needed.
11. Sauté the cutlets until lightly browned (2 to 2-1/2 minutes per side).

12. Put on the plate in the oven to keep warm.

### **The Sauce and the Finish**

13. Over medium heat in the same skillet, sauté the shallot (30 seconds) or garlic (10 seconds) until fragrant.
14. Add the stock and lemon slices, increase the heat to high, and scrape the pan bottom with a wooden spoon or spatula to loosen the browned bits.
15. Simmer 1-2 minutes to reduce the liquid by half (a lot will have flashed off as you first pour it in).
16. Off the heat, swirl in the parsley and the butter to thicken the sauce. A dash of salt (if you used low-sodium broth) and a dash of pepper to finish.
17. Chicken propped on rice and drizzled with sauce is lovely. Yes, you can eat the lemon slices too, the sharp and delightful without being bitter. (Tomorrow, toast the chicken to recrisp and eat in a sandwich or with any leftover sauce and rice.)



*Butterflying chicken.*



*Crazy good with a side of roasted cauliflower and crumbled bacon. Or just serve on rice with any side veggie.*