

Bacon Basil Chicken Spiedini

This recipe is Steven Raichlen's. Steven is the author of the *Barbecue Bible* cookbook series and the host of *Project Smoke* and *Primal Grill* on public television. For more awesome barbecue recipes and helpful cooking tips, visit his website, Barbecuebible.com.

WE RECOMMEND Pan-Fried Pier Summer Herb Bacon

DRINK PAIRING Look for a cool climate Sauvignon Blanc from the Loire Valley in France, or New Zealand. Its grassy, smoky, herbal notes complement the basil and the smoked cheese.

MAKES 12 skewers

PREP TIME 15–20 minutes

COOK TIME 15 minutes

TOTAL TIME 30–35 minutes

1 ½ pounds chicken tenders or boneless skinless chicken breasts

Coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

12 ounces smoked mozzarella

12 wooden skewers, soaked in water

12 large fresh basil leaves

12 strips thin-sliced bacon

butcher's string

1 12" x 18" piece of aluminum foil, folded into thirds, like a business letter

1 If you're using chicken tenders, remove the sinews. If you're using chicken breasts, cut them into 12 strips of roughly equal size and length. Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Slice the cheese into 12 finger-length strips. Skewer each chicken strip lengthwise, starting at one end and running lengthwise to the opposite end. Leave very little of the skewer's pointed tip exposed, as it will burn.

2 Lay a strip of cheese on each chicken skewer. Top with a basil leaf. Secure the basil leaf and cheese to the chicken by wrapping the piece of bacon around each chicken skewer. To keep the bacon from uncoiling as it cooks, tuck the top end of the bacon under the first winding and secure with butchers string.

3 Set up the grill for direct grilling and preheat to medium-high.

4 When you're ready to cook, brush and oil the grill grate. Place the folded aluminum foil grill shield toward the front of the grill grate. Arrange the spiedini on the grill grate, using the grill shield to protect the exposed ends of the skewers. Rotate the skewers every 2–3 minutes so the bacon browns evenly. If

flare-ups occur, pull the spiedini forward so they're protected by the grill shield. When the fire dies down, return them to their original positions.

5 Transfer the cooked spiedini to a platter or plates. Serve immediately.

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