

# Creamy Ricotta Chicken and Orzo

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## Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1.5 pound boneless skinless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- 1 large shallot halved and thinly sliced
- 8 ounces baby bella mushrooms, minced
- 1 large zucchini, diced into chunks
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 2 cups low sodium chicken broth
- Zest of ½ lemon
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 cup uncooked orzo pasta
- ¾ cup whole milk ricotta cheese (sub dairy-free ricotta for dairy-free; I like Kite Hill brand)
- 4 cups baby spinach packed
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella (omit for dairy-free or use dairy-free cheese)
- ¼ cup thinly sliced basil OR parsley] leaves for serving

## Directions

1. Cut chicken breast into bite sized cubes, and add to the slow cooker. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Add minced garlic, mushrooms, shallot and zucchini to the crockpot, followed by white wine and chicken broth. Add italian seasoning, lemon zest and lemon juice (can also put lemon into the crockpot for more flavor). Stir gently, cover and cook on low for 2-3 hours, or until chicken is cooked through.
3. Remove lid, add uncooked orzo and ricotta cheese to the crockpot. Turn temperature to high and cook for about 30 minutes, or until pasta is al dente. Stir in fresh spinach, and top with mozzarella
4. You can either replace lid and let the cheese melt, or remove the inner part of your crock pot if oven safe and place uncovered in the oven for 4-5 minutes on broil, until cheese is bubbly and melted
5. Top with fresh basil, or parsley
6. Enjoy!

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MADE WITH LOVE

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by Teresa Forchand