

## *CHICKEN WITH RED PEPPERS*

*I usually use thighs only these days and I do skin them and trim off some of the fat. I double the peppers. Two pounds isn't really very much, and we want leftovers. I've never used the prosciutto.*

*2-4 small, hot green chiles (serrano or japapeño)  
1 chicken, 3-4 lb, cut into 8 serving pieces  
and skinned, if desired  
3-4 T. vegetable oil  
12 large garlic cloves, peeled and cut into thin slices  
2 lb. red bell peppers, cored, seeded and thickly sliced  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Optional—2-4 thick slices (4-8 oz.) prosciutto,  
cut in strips  
1 - 2 large onions, cut in half and sliced  
1 large can (28 oz.) plum tomatoes, drained and roughly chopped*

1. Core and seed the chiles. Slice into very thin strips and set aside.
2. Season the chicken liberally with salt and pepper. In a deep-sided skillet, preferably non-stick, heat 3 T. oil over high heat. When the oil is hot, add the chicken and brown the chicken on all sides. Work in batches if necessary to avoid over-crowding the skillet.
3. Return the all the chicken to the skillet. (It is OK to crowd the pieces at this point.) Put any pieces with a "top" side face down. Add the garlic, red pepper slices, chiles and ham, burying them among the chicken pieces. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cover and cook over medium heat, until the chicken is cooked through, and the peppers are very soft, about 45 minutes to an hour. The peppers will give off enough liquid for cooking, but check the skillet from time to time to make sure the chicken isn't sticking. You may also need to adjust the heat near the end of the cooking to avoid scorching.
4. While the chicken is cooking, heat the remaining 1 T. oil in another large skillet over medium-low heat. Add the onions and cook until very soft—5-10 minutes. Add the tomatoes and continue cooking for another 30 minutes. The mixture should be soft and well blended. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
5. To serve, spread the onion and tomato mixture on a pre-heated platter. Cover with the chicken mixture and serve immediately with white rice.

This dish can be made ahead—in fact it may be better that way since the flavors will mellow and blend as it sits. Store and reheat the two mixtures separately.