Chicken Parmesan

4 Chicken breasts, butterflied or cutlets  
1 bag Breadcrumbs from SND, seasoned or unseasoned  
3 Eggs  
¾ cup Flour  
1 tsp each Salt and pepper  
1 tsp Italian seasoning  
¼ cup plus Garlic and parmesan EVOO  
Tomato sauce (recipe below)  
(Lots) Mozzarella cheese, fresh or shredded  
Parmesan cheese, grated  
Cooked pasta of your choice

Make your sauce first if using homemade. In a shallow pie or cake pan add the eggs, half the salt and pepper, and whisk with a fork. In another place the breadcrumbs, and in a third: the flour, Italian seasoning, and the rest of salt and pepper. Prepare your other pans all before touching the chicken to minimize chances of cross contamination. You’ll need a large skillet and if all the chicken does not fit in a single layer in your skillet, then a baking dish/pan large enough to do so. Add the EVOO to your skillet on the stove and place over medium to medium high heat.

Bread the chicken using the traditional three step method of flour, eggs, and then breadcrumbs (using one pair of tongs in the egg stage and another in the flour makes this easier and less messy). Once your chicken is breaded and skillet is hot, place the chicken in the pan, being careful not to over crowd the pan. Leave them alone at this point! Allow the breadcrumbs to form a nice golden brown crust before flipping to the other side and the same treatment (this lasts anywhere from 4-6 min). Remove the seared chicken to your prepared baking pan if using and continue frying in batches, adding more oil if needed.

Once all the chicken breasts are seared and either still in the skillet or a larger baking pan, ladle your prepared sauce over top and then both cheeses. Bake covered in a 350 degree oven for about 20-40 minutes (uncovering after 15), depending on how thick your chicken is. Just pierce it with a steak knife and make sure the juices run clear.

Sprinkle with fresh basil and drizzle with EVOO if desired. Serve with cooked pasta, salad, and a glass of your favorite wine, you deserve that wine.

Tomato sauce

2 28oz Canned whole tomatoes, crushed by hand  
2 14.5oz Canned chopped fire roasted tomatoes  
¼ cup Garlic and parmesan EVOO  
1 medium Onion, chopped  
1 pound Ground beef, cooked and drained (optional)  
2 tbsp Tomato paste  
1 cup Water  
Salt and pepper  
½ tsp Crushed red pepper  
1 tsp Italian seasoning  
2 tbsp Fresh basil, chopped (optional)  
Sugar, if needed  
Bread to taste

In a large pot heat EVOO on medium-high until it shimmers and then sauté onion with Italian seasoning and crushed red pepper. Once onions are softened and very fragrant add the tomato paste and cook about 30 or so seconds. Add the canned tomatoes, water, and stir. Bring to a low bubble, stirring semi-frequently, and then reduce temperature to cook on a simmer until desired consistency (about 2 hours) stirring occasionally. Add chopped fresh basil and then taste with a piece of bread (this is necessary to see how your sauce will taste with the pasta). Adjust seasoning with salt, pepper, and sugar accordingly. Top your favorite pasta, pizza, or whatever you like! You may also try adding a splash of cream or a spoonful of your favorite pesto for a fun variation.