

Strategies Applied:

- Chicken:** I don't think there's any reason to buy chicken at less than a stellar price. When I plan on using bone in chicken, I look for several packages with smaller breasts – portion control! If you have larger breasts, and the budget, go for it – you could certainly take it off the bone and slice and portion out if you need to stretch it. (This allows you to save those bones for stock, too, and to tell you the truth, my kids ate so many boneless chicken breasts that they've become a bit squeamish about bones and prefer their meat off – shame on me, I know, but they're such a quick dinner option I maybe over did them for years!)
- Feta Cheese:** Really watch for sale prices on grocery store feta – generally I find these types of cheeses go on sale often around holidays and literally keep for weeks and weeks. I look for manufacturer's coupons, too, in the “packaged” deli cheese area or on their websites – they often have long expiration dates, so I pick those coupons up even when I don't plan to buy and then I'm poised to buy at the best price. If your package is larger or smaller, don't sweat it, but do save a bit for the salad! Cost for a six ounce package is about \$1.25 with a good sale and coupon.
- Chicken Stock:** If you read me regularly, I make my own with scraps of vegetables and bones – here's the basic recipe I use for [Best Turkey or Chicken Stock](#) – it's not particular and though it simmers for a long time, the burner is barely on – I just count it as free.
- Grapes:** On sale this week for \$1.29, I often find them now and then for 89 or 99 cents a pound. Use the rest as a snack or throw together a Fruited Chicken Salad with any leftovers. Make sure to wash your grapes very well, and make sure they're dry before roasting.
- Olive Oil:** See my strategies for buying [Olive oil](#), but basically watch for sales and coupons! My buy price (I pick it up whether I need it or not when it's at my 'buy' price!) is about 8 cents an ounce, so two tablespoons runs about 18 cents.
- Wine:** I really shop the sales and speak to the employees – I find I can find great wines for a pittance. If you have a wine shop you like, I find you can get mailings or emails for their best sales – often in the fall and spring. If I were making a recipe with a long, slow reduction like a stew, especially with a red wine, I'd be a lot more careful, because any tannins or off flavors might be even more exaggerated, but all I want here is a well rounded flavor and a bit of acidity. I'll even throw the wine in if it's starting to turn to vinegar, and if I didn't have any wine, I'd add a bit more stock and a few teaspoons of white wine or champagne vinegar, or even a red wine vinegar, or a squeeze of lemon juice.

•**Butter:** On sale for Easter last week, 1 pound is \$1.49 – stock up as much as you can during Holiday weeks and freeze. Ours was a limit 1 sale, but I stopped by the store more than once.

•**Chives or Parsley:** I grow a few herbs outside every year and bring them in during the fall see [Vegetables and Fruits](#). Green onion thinly sliced is fine for this, too – I use mine and save a bit of the white in a glass and it grows back. Thank goodness it's spring – I've killed off my thyme and parsley, but my chives are still going and it's April, now. If you don't have don't worry – it's pretty but not essential.

•**Risotto:** See details under recipe for Asparagus Risotto – I went a little cheap and used the cheap Parmesan and vinegar, partially for cost, and partially because I used my last dribble of wine in the sauce!

•**Salad:** I opted for a kind of Greek salad, mainly because I used Feta. I always look for the heads of Romaine rather than the packages – it tastes better and lasts a lot longer and costs a LOT less!