

cooks larder basic cookery lesson

roasting a chicken

c Sam Wight

Roast chicken is the perfect comfort meal, and a real crowd pleaser. Done well, there is nothing better.

Begin with the best chicken that you can afford, preferably free-range

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
3 tbs Olive oil

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1. Wash the chicken inside and out. Thoroughly dry with a paper towel.
 2. Very gently separate the skin at the tip of the breast and pull up, separating the skin from the meat. Be sure not to rip the skin.
 3. Gently push the butter slices, pesto ricotta or herbs into this cavity.
 4. Place the chicken on a low cooling rack in a sturdy oven pan. Sit the chicken on top of the rack.
 5. Season all over with a good 2 tbs of sea salt, and pepper. Don't forget underneath and the wings!
 6. Drizzle with some olive oil, and massage into the skin.
 7. Squeeze some of the lemon over the bird
 8. Roast in the centre of a pre-heated oven, 190°C, for 40 minutes per kilogram plus 15 minutes extra - this will be 1 hour and 35 minutes for a 2kg bird.
 9. For the final 15 minutes of cooking, increase the heat to 220°C to give the skin that final golden crispiness.

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