



Definitely on the ‘last meal’ list for me—nothing beats it!

Serves 4

Cooking style: Roast

Equipment: chopping board, cook’s knife or scissors, kitchen string, large roasting pan, rack to fit inside the pan, sheet of foil to cover.

1 x size 16 (3 lb 5 oz/1.6 kg) free-range whole chicken

2 lemons, quartered
several sprigs thyme or
sprigs of oregano

1¾ fl oz/50 ml olive oil
sea salt flakes and freshly
ground black pepper
10½ fl oz/300 ml chicken
stock

3½ fl oz/100 ml red wine
1 heaped tablespoon red
currant jelly or plum jam

Rinse the chicken well inside and out and pat dry with paper towel.

Preheat the oven to 400°F/200°C. Place a rack inside a large baking dish. It’s better to sit the chicken up out of any juices.

Place the lemons and herbs inside the cavity. Tuck the wings underneath (or trim off the bottom section of the wing using scissors, and discard). Tie the legs together firmly with kitchen string.

Use clean hands to rub the chicken all over with olive oil, salt and pepper.

Place the chicken breast-side up into a roasting pan. Add 1¾ fl oz/50 ml water to the pan. This helps to keep the chicken moist and creates wonderful juices in the bottom of the pan for the gravy.

Roast for 1 hour, basting occasionally with some of the oil from the bottom of the pan. Roast a further 30–40 minutes. Test the chicken with the tip of a knife in the thickest section of the thigh. The juices should run clear.

Remove the chicken and set aside to rest, covered lightly with a sheet of foil.

Skim off any excess fat from the roasting pan. Add the stock, red wine and jelly or jam. Bring to the boil, stirring and incorporating all the bits from the bottom of the pan. Simmer for 8 minutes. Taste and add salt and pepper if required.

Serve the chicken and sauce with your favourite roasted vegetables.

NOTE: For amazing crispy skin, pour boiling water over the chicken before cooking. You will see the skin plump up. Pat dry with paper towel before placing in the oven.

CLASSIC ROAST CHICKEN

Fixing What Went Wrong

The chicken was misshapen with the legs cooked apart—looking dry and unevenly cooked. **Reason:** The chicken wasn’t trussed properly. For even results always tie the legs together with string and tuck the wings under or remove the tips.

The skin is broken. **Reason:** The skin was torn. Take care not to be rough when turning or moving the chicken.

Soggy underneath and ‘water logged’. **Reason:** Always sit the chicken on a rack to roast—the colour and crispness will be even and all over the chicken.