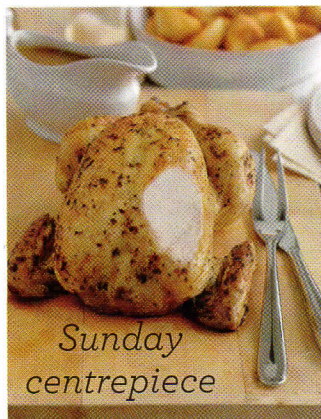


Roast Chicken with Herb Butter

This is the simplest of roasts, yet incredibly popular. Herb butter enriches the juices during roasting, making the gravy rich.

Hands-on time **30min**. Cooking time **about 1hr 45min**. Serves **6**



Sunday centrepiece

- ◆ 1.5-1.8kg (3¼lb-4lb) whole chicken
- ◆ 1 onion, cut into wedges
- ◆ 1 lemon, cut into six wedges

FOR THE HERB BUTTER

- ◆ 75g (3oz) butter, at room temperature
- ◆ 3tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley
- ◆ 1tbsp finely chopped fresh chives
- ◆ 1tsp finely chopped fresh tarragon or picked thyme leaves
- ◆ 1tsp lemon juice

FOR THE GRAVY

- ◆ 2tsp plain flour
- ◆ 300ml (½ pint) hot chicken stock
- ◆ 4tbsp white or red wine (optional)

1 Start by making herb butter. Put butter in a bowl and beat with a spoon to soften. Stir in herbs, lemon juice and some seasoning until combined. Set aside.

2 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. To prepare the chicken for roasting, pull off any excess white fat around the tail opening of the chicken. Wipe the cavity with kitchen paper, then use a fresh piece to dry the skin.

3 Put a couple of onion wedges into the cavity and secure it. Turn the chicken breast-side down, then pull the neck skin over the neck cavity. If you like,

cut off the excess skin to neaten.

4 Twist wings so the tips come up and over the neck skin to secure it. Turn chicken breast-side up and tie legs together with string. Scatter remaining onion and lemon wedges into a sturdy roasting tin just larger than the chicken, and cover with a rack. Spread herb butter liberally over the bird.

5 Flip the bird on to its breast. Roast for 1¼-1½hr, carefully turning the bird breast-side up after 20min (and basting with the juices). Continue roasting until chicken is cooked – the juices should run clear when the flesh is pierced with a knife in the area between the body and leg.

6 When cooked, transfer the bird to a board and wrap in foil. Leave to rest for at least 15min (up to 45min) while you make the gravy.

7 Lift the rack off the tin and discard onion. Tilt the tin so juices settle in one corner, then spoon off most of the fat (leaving about 1½tbsp) and discard.

8 Put the tin directly over medium hob heat and sprinkle in the flour. Whisk for 2-3min (scraping up any sticky bits) until flour browns a little and forms a smooth paste. Gradually pour in the stock and bring to the boil, whisking all the time. Add wine, if using, and whisk to mix. Simmer for 2min, then check seasoning.

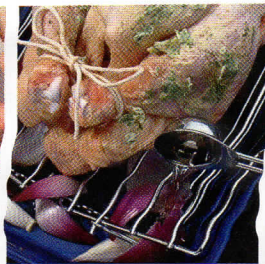
KEY STEPS

STUFF IT



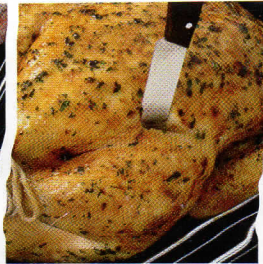
Put a couple of onion wedges into the chicken cavity, then turn the bird breast-side down to secure the neck skin.

SECURE IT



Tie the drumsticks together with string to close the cavity.

TEST IT



Juices should run clear when skin is pierced with a knife between the body and leg.

GREAT GRAVY



Gradually whisk in the hot chicken stock, scraping up any sticky bits.

Mixed Leaf Salad

This is a lovely way to prepare a salad ahead of time. I marinate the firmer vegetables in the dressing in the bottom of the bowl, then lay the delicate salad leaves on top and chill until needed. Toss the salad just before serving.

Hands-on time **10min**. Generously serves **6**

- ◆ 4-6 spring onions
- ◆ 6 celery sticks
- ◆ 1 small fennel bulb
- ◆ ½ cucumber
- ◆ 200g packet mixed salad leaves
- ◆ 1 Little Gem lettuce
- ◆ Large handful rocket leaves, baby spinach or lamb's lettuce

FOR THE DRESSING

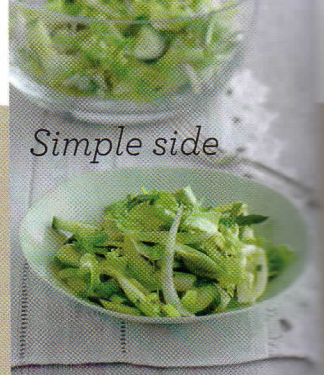
(Makes enough for two salads)

- ◆ 2tbsp white wine vinegar
- ◆ 2tsp Dijon mustard
- ◆ 1-2tsp caster sugar
- ◆ 6tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1tbsp chopped leafy fresh herbs, such as tarragon, basil and parsley

Strain into a gravy boat or jug and serve alongside chicken.

PER SERVING 372cal, 26g fat (10g saturates), 3g carbs (1g total sugars), 32g protein, 0.4g fibre

Simple side



1 Start by making the dressing. Put the vinegar, mustard, 1tsp sugar and some seasoning into a bowl. Whisk until combined. Add oil in a thin, steady stream, whisking constantly. Add more sugar or seasoning to taste.

2 Finely slice the spring onions, celery and fennel and place in a large salad bowl. Add half the dressing (see GH tip below) and herbs, and toss well.

3 Cut the cucumber in half lengthways, then cut across into thick slices. Put the cucumber and leaves into the bowl and season. Cover and chill for up to 4hr.

4 Toss together to serve.

PER SERVING 72cal, 6g fat (1g saturates), 3g carbs (3g total sugars), 1g protein, 2g fibre

GH TIP

Keep any spare dressing in a jar with a screw-top lid in the fridge for up to a week.

GET AHEAD The chicken can be prepared and spread with herb butter up to a day ahead. Cover with foil and chill. Let stand at room temperature for about 30min before roasting.