

Salt and Serenity

Roast Chicken 101

1 3½ - 4 pound whole chicken
1 Tablespoon kosher salt
1 teaspoon paprika
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 lemon, halved
2 sprigs fresh thyme
1 sprig fresh rosemary
¾ pound mini potatoes
6 shallots, peeled and halved
1 pound carrots, peeled and cut on the diagonal into 4 inch lengths
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
2 sprigs thyme, leaves pulled off stems
1 sprig rosemary, leaves pulled off stem and coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil
½ cup white wine
½ cup water

1. Pat chicken dry with paper towels. In a small bowl mix together salt, paprika and pepper. Place chicken on a rimmed baking sheet or platter. Season chicken, inside and out, with seasoning mixture.
2. Place halved lemon, thyme and rosemary sprigs inside chicken. Tie up legs with kitchen twine. Let chicken sit out on the counter for about an hour.
3. Place potatoes in a medium pot and cover with cold water by 2 inches. Add 2 teaspoons kosher salt. Bring to a boil. Turn heat down to medium. Simmer potatoes for about 10-15 minutes until a paring knife or skewer slips in and out of potatoes easily.
4. Drain potatoes. Transfer to a baking sheet or cutting board. Using a potato masher or fork, gently smash potatoes until the surface just splits. You are not making mashed potatoes here. You just want to flatten them slightly.
5. Make sure your oven rack is in the middle of your oven. Place a 12-inch cast iron skillet (or an enameled cast iron baking dish, about 12 x 16 inches in size) on rack in oven. Preheat oven to 425°F.

6. While you are waiting for oven to preheat, place halved shallots, smashed potatoes and sliced carrots in a mixing bowl. Add 2 tablespoons olive oil, salt, pepper, thyme leaves and chopped rosemary. Mix until all the veggies are coated.
7. Once oven is preheated, carefully remove skillet. Pour one tablespoon olive oil into skillet. Place chicken in center of skillet. Arrange veggies around the chicken. Roast for about 55-65 minutes, until a meat thermometer, inserted into the thickest part of the thigh, registers 165°F. Be careful thermometer does not touch the bone.
8. Using tongs, remove chicken from skillet and place on cutting board. Chicken must rest for 20-25 minutes before carving. Remove veggies from pan and set aside on serving platter. Wearing oven mitts, because the skillet is still extremely hot, carefully pour off all but about 1 tablespoon of fat from pan. Put skillet on stove. Add water and wine and bring to a boil. Use a wooden spoon to scrape up all the bits stuck to the pan. Continue cooking until the liquid is reduced by half. Pour pan sauce into sauce bowl.
9. Just before carving chicken, you can put veggies back into skillet and into the oven to reheat them if desired. Transfer chicken to cutting board and cut chicken into serving pieces. It's easiest to remove leg and thighs first, then the wings and finally the breasts. Serve with sauce on the side.