

Za'atar Roasted Chicken over Sumac Potatoes

Roast chicken is the ultimate comfort food. Just having it in the oven, makes me feel better. This version, from Adeena Sussman's new book, [Sababa](#), is akin to a big Israeli hug.

4 to 5 medium red potatoes (1½ pounds), scrubbed
4 medium shallots, peeled and quartered
1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
2 Tablespoons sumac
1 teaspoon Kosher salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 small roasting chicken (about 3½ to 4 pounds), patted dry
2 teaspoons Kosher salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 small lemon
5 Tablespoons Za'atar Spice Blend (recipe follows or store-bought, [PC](#) makes an excellent one)
3 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
¼ teaspoon dried red pepper flakes
2 garlic cloves, peeled and left whole
6 thyme sprigs

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F
2. Cut each potato into 6 wedges. In a 9 x 13-inch metal or glass baking dish, or a 12-inch cast iron skillet, toss the potatoes and shallots with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil, 2 Tablespoons of sumac, 1 teaspoon of Kosher salt and ¼ teaspoon of black pepper.
3. Season the cavity and exterior of the chicken well with 2 teaspoons Kosher salt and ½ teaspoon of pepper.
4. Zest the lemon into a small bowl, halve the lemon and set aside. Add the remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil to the bowl along with 4 tablespoons of the za'atar and the red pepper flakes and gently stir. Stuff the lemon halves, garlic, and thyme sprigs inside the chicken, then rub the chicken all over with the za'atar mixture. Sprinkle with the remaining tablespoon of za'atar. Place the chicken, breast-side up, on top of the potatoes.
5. Roast the chicken for 15 minutes, then reduce the heat to 350°F and continue to roast the chicken until a chicken leg jiggles when pulled, the juices run clear, and the potatoes underneath the chicken are soft and the ones on the edges are crisp and golden, about another hour and 20 minutes. The internal temperature,

when thermometer is inserted into the deepest part of the thigh (do not touch bone), should read 175°F.

6. Remove the chicken from the oven and let rest for 10 minutes. Remove the lemon, garlic, and thyme springs from the cavity, discarding the garlic and thyme. Carve the chicken right on top of the potatoes, letting the juice coat the potatoes, then squeeze one or both halves of the reserved lemon on the chicken and potatoes.

Serves: 4

Za'atar Spice Blend

6 Tablespoons dried oregano
3 Tablespoons dried marjoram
3 Tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
4 teaspoons dried thyme
1 Tablespoon ground sumac
1 teaspoon Kosher salt

Add ingredients to a medium sized mixing bowl and mix to combine. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 months.