

Chef Thomas Keller's Perfect Oven Roasted Chicken Recipe: Learn How to Roast a Chicken



Ingredients

Chef Thomas Keller's roast chicken recipe is a one-pot dish, but it involves

multiple steps: brining, air-drying, trussing, and roasting. Brining the chicken will improve its flavor, while trussing the bird will help the chicken brown more beautifully and evenly. Prior to roasting, Chef Keller removes the wishbone, as it makes for easier carving.

The root vegetables make a bed for the chicken, and the rendered fat and juices from the cooked chicken add flavor the vegetables. Use a cast iron pan for even more depth of flavor. This roasted chicken recipe makes a delicious Sunday dinner for the whole family, but don't hesitate to cook it for yourself.

Serves 2 as an entrée, or 4 family style

For the roasted chicken:

1 whole chicken

2½ to 3 pounds

3 rutabagas

2 turnips

2 parsnips

2 large leeks

4 carrots, trimmed and cut in half

1 small onion

8 small red-skinned potatoes

Clarified butter (or ⅓ cup canola oil)

1 lemon

Equipment:

Parchment-lined cutting board

Paring knife

Abrasive green scrub pad

Kitchen twine

Kitchen shears

Roasting pan or cast iron skillet

Meat thermometer

Chef's knife

For the brine:

5 lemons, halved

6 bay leaves

1/2 bunch (4 ounces) flat-leaf parsley

1/2 bunch (1 ounce) fresh thyme

1/4 cup clover honey

1 head garlic, halved through the equator

1/8 cup black peppercorns

1 cup (10 ounces) kosher salt

1 gallon water

Equipment:

Stockpot

Container

Brine and Prepare:

1. Combine all of the brine ingredients and bring to a boil. Once boiling, remove from heat and allow to cool slightly. Pour brine into a container large enough to hold both the brine and the chicken. Chill brine in the refrigerator.
2. While the brine is chilling, remove the chicken neck and innards from the cavity, if present. Using a paring knife, cut out the wishbone from the chicken—this will make it easier to carve the chicken. Submerge the chicken in the cold brine and chill in the refrigerator for 8 to 12 hours.
3. When done brining, pat the chicken dry with paper towels. Discard the brine.

Truss the Chicken:

1. Cut a piece of kitchen twine about 3 feet long. Tuck the center of the string under the pope's nose (the small bit of meat at the top of the chicken's tail end), then wrap around and over the ends of the legs. Cross the twine and slide under each leg to create a figure 8. Pull across and back at the same time to plump the chicken breast and bring the twine all the way around the breasts. As you press into the breast meat with your thumbs at the neck, cross each side of the string under the cut neck bone. Tie a slipknot, then bring each end of the string around a wing to close them to the body. Tie off to finish. Place chicken in a baking sheet or dish and leave uncovered in the refrigerator for two days. Doing so dries out any excess moisture from the chicken skin, allowing it to crisp beautifully during roasting.
2. After two days, remove the chicken from the refrigerator and allow to temper to room temperature for 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Prepare the Root Vegetables:

1. Cut off both ends of the rutabagas. Stand the rutabagas on end and cut away 1/8-inch of the tough skin, working from top to bottom. Cut into 3/4-inch wedges.
2. Repeat with the turnips, cutting the wedges to match the size of the rutabagas. Cut off the dark green leaves from the top of the leeks. Trim off and discard any darkened outer layers. Trim the root ends, cutting around them on a 45-degree angle.
3. Halve the leeks lengthwise and rinse the leeks well under warm water. Scrub the parsnips and carrots, trim, and halve lengthwise.
4. Cut the parsnips into wedges similar in size to the other vegetables to ensure even cooking.
5. Cut the onion into wedges and leave the potatoes whole.
6. Combine all the vegetables in the roasting pan and season with salt. Drizzle clarified butter or canola oil over the vegetables and mix with your hands to coat.

Roast the chicken:

1. Preheat the oven to 475°F. Brush the chicken with clarified butter and season all sides with salt. Make a nest in the center of the vegetables and nestle the chicken in it.
2. Roast for 20 to 25 minutes. Reduce the heat to 400°F and roast for an additional 30 to 45 minutes, or until the temperature registers 160°F in the meatiest portions of the bird (the thickest part of the thigh, and under the breast where the thigh meets the breast) and the juices run clear. If necessary, return the bird to the oven for more roasting; check it every 5 minutes.
3. Transfer the chicken to a carving board and allow to rest for 20 to 30 minutes.
4. Just before serving, set the pan of vegetables over medium heat and reheat the vegetables, turning them to coat with the pan juices.

5. Finish with a squeeze of lemon. Carve the chicken into serving pieces, arrange over the vegetables, finish with grey sea salt, and serve.

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