



COOKING WITH MEAT

THE CHICKEN *Masterclass*

Versatility

One of the most versatile and popular meats available from your Q Guild Butcher. They stock a wide variety of cuts and are happy to advise on quantities and cooking suggestions.

Popular Cuts...

Legs, Drumsticks and Wings... great party food especially if coated in spicy breadcrumbs or a sticky BBQ marinade.

Breast and Fillets... bone-in with the skin left on it's great roasted in the oven... however if boned and skinned it is best covered or wrapped with strips of streaky bacon to prevent drying out. Alternatively cut into strips, brush with a marinade and grill for a few minutes either side. Great topping for a hearty salad.

Thighs... Fantastic in casseroles or if coated in a marinade cook covered in the oven for most of the time and then uncovered for the last ten minutes.

Full and Half Chicken... great oven roasted or have a go at Beer Can Chicken either on a BBQ or in the oven, spatchcocked is also great because it cuts down on cooking time. (Ask your Q Guild Butcher to spatchcock it for you!)



Q Top Tip: When BBQ'ing Chicken if you want to ensure the meat next to the bone is thoroughly cooked, part cook in the oven and then finish off on the BBQ.



ROASTING

Masterclass

Always

- Remove your chicken from the fridge at least 30 minutes before cooking so that it reaches room temperature.
- Remove the giblets (if it has any inside) before cooking and use them for gravy stock (see below).
- Never wash raw chicken – it contains campylobacter that can easily be splashed about the kitchen – it is killed when cooked.
- Dry your chicken with a paper towel and untie any strings, this allows heat to circulate more easily.
- Rub the skin with olive oil or smear with butter, then sprinkle with salt and pepper.
- Push half a lemon and a few herb sprigs into the cavity – helps flavour the meat.
- Weigh your chicken to calculate cooking time: 20mins per 1lb +15mins (45mins per kg +20mins) (suggest slightly longer for Free Range or Organic as the meat is often thicker).
- Sit the bird in a large roasting tin and don't cover, otherwise you lose that crispy skin.
- Baste carefully a few times during cooking to keep the meat moist.
- Always check with a thermometer that the core temperature has reached 75°C, by probing the thickest part of the thigh.
- Rest the cooked chicken for about 10-15mins to keep it moist and loosely cover so as not to soften that crispy skin.



Let's not forget the Gravy...

This is a great way to use up that bag of giblets often found inside a chicken. Cover with about two inches of water add a piece of carrot, a quarter of onion and a sprig of Thyme, bring to boil, reduce heat to a strong simmer and cook for 45mins-1hour making sure it does not dry up.

Sieve and set aside for use when making the gravy.



When the chicken is cooked remove from the roasting tin and let it rest. Place the roasting tin back on the hob and whisk in 2 tspns of plain flour to the remaining chicken juices while gently heating.

Stir in and scrape up the remaining meat juices and caramelised sticky bits. Keep stirring until the liquid starts to thicken and turns golden, then add in some dry white wine and some of the sieved stock made from the giblets.

Stir well and bring to the boil, adding more stock or wine until it reaches the right consistency. Don't forget to check the taste and season if required. Strain the gravy before serving and reheat if necessary.

Q Top Tip: Alternative use for giblets, pop them into the roasting pan with the chicken to enhance the flavour.

Stuffing...Quick & Easy recipe

Mix together 1 onion, knob of butter, 70g fresh breadcrumbs, 400g pork sausage meat, 1tblspn or handful of fresh sage finely chopped and black pepper.

Alternative flavours...

- Substitute plain sausage meat for flavoured sausage i.e. chorizo, Italian, pork and leek or Cumberland style.
- Don't use sausage meat but swap for chopped mushroom, juice and zest of a lemon, finely chopped flat leaf parsley, thyme and black pepper.

Cook...

Pre-prepare an oven proof dish by rubbing with butter, add the stuffing mix then cover.

Place the dish in a large roasting tin, add water to the tin until half-way up the side of the dish, cook in the oven for about 35-40 minutes.



Chicken Labelling Terms – what to look for

High Welfare Barn Reared Chickens are reared indoors under natural light, have increased space and a richer environment. RSPCA specifications go one further and insist on a slow growing breed.

Free Range chickens have continuous daytime access to an outdoor range, enriched environment and indoor sheds where they are housed at night. They have increased space per chicken and grow more slowly, living for up to 56 days.

Organic chickens have even more space to roam and are slower growing. It is often traditional breeds that are bred in this way and they live for at least 70 days.

Always check the label or be reassured and buy from your local Q Butcher!



The Butcher's Wife's Coq Au Vin

from Q Guild Member Jan Corry

This is one of our food taste memories from the early 80's when it was so fashionable to bring out the best china and have a dinner party.

Now it's plain old chicken in wine and the recipe has got simpler over the years. This is a one pot recipe, just throw it all in and the taste is still as good.

Ingredients

Whole chicken legs (skin-on and one-in), one per person

Marinade (1 glass red wine, 1 glass of chicken stock, thyme and optional garlic)

Chopped, smoked bacon lardons

4 small button mushrooms per chicken leg

4-6 small shallot onions, cut in half

1 large carrot in small chunks

1 celery stick, thinly sliced

Flour to dust the legs (can substitute with corn starch)

Olive oil (light, not extra virgin)

1 large glass of red wine

1 large glass of chicken stock

Salt and black pepper, to taste

Method

Marinate the chicken legs overnight in 1 glass of red wine and 1 glass of chicken stock, thyme and a clove of garlic, cut in half (this is optional but adds to the flavour).

Drain off the liquid from the chicken legs and set aside to dry. Fry off the bacon lardons, mushrooms, onions, carrots and celery and transfer to a casserole dish. Pat the chicken legs, dust in flour/corn starch and brown off in the residue in the frying pan. You may need to add a little more olive oil. Add the chicken legs to the casserole dish.

Slowly add the second glasses of wine and chicken stock and scrape up all the residue from the bottom of the pan and add to the casserole dish. You may want to add more red wine/stock – just keep checking it doesn't dry out.

Cover with foil or lid and place in a preheated oven 180°C, 350°F/gas mark 4 and cook for 30 minutes. Turn the oven down to 170°C, 325°F/gas mark 3 and cook for 1 hour. Check and stir and, if necessary, add more wine/stock.

Uncover and season to taste during the last 10 minutes of the cooking time.

Lovely with a creamy mash and good to have something green on your plate, like broccoli, kale or wilted spinach (I sometimes add spinach to the casserole in the last 10 minutes of the cooking time).