

Favorite Roast Chicken



Ingredients:

One 2- to 3-pound farm-raised chicken

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 teaspoons minced thyme (optional)

Unsalted butter

Dijon mustard

Directions:

Step 1: Preheat the oven to 450°F. Rinse the chicken, then dry it very well with paper towels, inside and out. The less it steams, the drier the heat, the better.

Step 2: Salt and pepper the cavity, then truss the bird. Trussing is not difficult, and if you roast chicken often, it's a good technique to feel comfortable with. When you truss a bird, the wings and legs stay close to the body; the ends of the drumsticks cover the top of the breast and keep it from drying out. Trussing helps the chicken to cook evenly, and it also makes for a more beautiful roasted bird.

Step 3: Now, salt the chicken, nice uniform coating will result in a crisp, salty, flavorful skin (about 1 tablespoon). When it's cooked, you should still be able to make out the salt baked onto the crisp skin. Season to taste with pepper.

Step 4: Place the chicken in a sauté pan or roasting pan and, when the oven is up to temperature, put the chicken in the oven. Don't baste it; don't add butter; you can if you wish, but it creates steam. Roast it until it's done, 50 to 60 minutes.

Step 5: Remove it from the oven and add the thyme, if using, to the pan. Baste the chicken with the juices and thyme and let it rest for 15 minutes on a cutting board.

Step 6: Remove the twine. Remove the legs and thighs.

Cut the breast down the middle and serve it on the bone, with one wing joint still attached to each. The preparation is not meant to be super elegant. Slather the meat with fresh butter.

Serve with mustard on the side. You'll start using a knife and fork, but finish with your fingers, because it's so good.