

To inspire weekend lunching: roast chicken with crispy skin

Ingredients (serves 4 – 6)

1 whole chicken (approximately 1.6kg) preferably free-range or organic
2 medium red onions
2 bulbs of garlic
1 lemon
Fresh thyme, basil, rosemary, parsley, bay or sage (or a mixture)
Olive oil
Butter
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
Baby tomatoes on the vine

Method

1. Take your chicken out of the fridge 30 minutes before it needs to go into the oven.
2. Preheat the oven to 240°C.
3. Lift the chicken skin slightly and rub butter between the flesh and skin. Rub butter onto the skin too – this will give you the crispiness you're after.
4. Quarter your lemon and place inside the chicken's cavity along with a handful of herbs and some of your onion. Drizzle the whole bird with olive oil and season well with salt and pepper.
5. Place the prepared bird into the roasting tray. You can tie the bird's legs together to keep the stuffing inside.
6. Roughly chop the onions and cut the garlic bulbs in half – it's not necessary to peel either of these ingredients – and put them into the roasting tray with the bird.
7. Put the tray into the preheated oven and turn the heat down immediately to 200°C. Cook the chicken for 1 hour and 20 minutes, basting halfway through cooking. Add the tomatoes on the vine to the roasting tray. If the onions begin to look a bit dry, add a splash of water to the tray to stop them burning.
8. Once the chicken is cooked, take the tray out of the oven and transfer the chicken to a board to rest for 15 minutes. Cover with a layer of tinfoil and a tea towel and put aside while you prepare the gravy.