



“Spatchcock” with Chilli, Garlic & Lemon

What does spatchcock mean? It’s a method of preparing any poultry or game bird for cooking by removing the backbone and flattening it out - butterflying in other words. So quail, duck, guinea fowl, and chickens large and small, can all be “spatchcocked”. Increasingly young chickens are referred to as spatchcocks, though the French term, poussin, is also used. Regardless of what you call them, small chickens make a great single serve and are particularly quick and easy to cook once they’re flattened out. A simple marinade of garlic, chilli and lemon makes them finger licking good. I use sambal oelek for a chilli hit in any dish (the Conimex brand is just chilli and salt so no Asian flavour), but use finely chopped red chilli or chilli flakes if you prefer. Serve a glass of Logan Weemala pinot gris alongside, with its gorgeous pale bronze blush and lemony tang - and some steamed rice or crusty bread to soak up all the delicious roasting juices.

Serves 2

INGREDIENTS

- 2 x 600g poussins (see below)
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 lemon, zest finely grated, juiced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon dried chilli flakes
- 1 teaspoon salt flakes

Radicchio, Parsley & Red Onion Salad

- ½ radicchio, finely sliced
- ½ bunch flat-leaf parsley, leaves chopped
- 1 small red onion, very finely sliced
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- Salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Poussins are young chickens; order free-range ones through Eugowra Game Birds, poultry supplier to top restaurants who also home delivers.

METHOD

1. Wipe cavity of the poussins out with paper towel and pat skin dry.
2. Place on a chopping board, breast down with legs facing towards you. Using poultry shears, cut either side of the backbone, removing it and the neck. Turn them over and press firmly along the breastbone with the heel of your hand to flatten out the birds - this is called spatchcocking.
3. Place in a single layer in a baking dish.
4. Whisk together oil, lemon zest and 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice, garlic, chilli and salt.
5. Pour over the chickens and ensure they are well coated - it’s a bit messy but this is best done with your hands, rubbing the marinade all over the chickens. Cover and set aside for 30 minutes.
6. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 200° C.
7. Place in the oven, breast side-down, and bake for 15 minutes, then turn over and cook for a further 10 minutes. If skin isn’t already well-coloured, turn on the overhead grill for a few minutes to crisp and colour it, watching them closely as they will colour quickly.
8. Remove from oven, cover loosely with aluminium foil and set aside for 5 minutes.
9. Meanwhile, make Radicchio, Parsley & Red Onion Salad: combine radicchio, parsley and onion in a bowl. Place lemon juice, salt, pepper, mustard and oil in a screw top jar and shake well to combine. Pour over the salad and toss to combine.
10. Serve chickens on a bed of salad.