

Red-Roasted Chicken Salad

Red-cooking is a classic Cantonese technique of braising food in dark soy sauce and Shaoxing to give a burgundy hue to the food. Inspired by a recipe of Cheong Liew's, I use those ingredients to marinate chicken before baking it. Cheong served a deep-fried version of this dish as part of Neddy's weekly 7-course Chinese banquets; they cost \$14.80 in the late 70s, how I wish I'd been around for them! The quantities here will feed 2 as a main course with steamed rice and you can cook a large chicken, or any chicken pieces, in the same way, you may just need to increase the marinade and the cooking time a little. Use any salad leaves or Asian herbs you like to accompany the chicken, including mizuna, perilla, oak leaf lettuce, Thai basil and coriander. While it's not traditional, I sometimes serve a little dish of prickly ash on the side, and I love the savoury complexity of Ochota Barrels Surfer Rosa with my red-roasted chicken salad.

Serves 4 as a starter

INGREDIENTS

- 600g spatchcock
- 1 green onion, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons finely grated ginger
- 1 tablespoon Shaoxing rice wine
- 1 tablespoon dark sweet soy sauce
- 1 Lebanese cucumber, shredded
- Salad leaves or herbs, for serving

Chilli Vinaigrette (makes about ¼ cup)

- 2 teaspoons rice wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon castor sugar
- 2 teaspoons Sichuan chilli sauce
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1½ teaspoons soy sauce
- 1 green onion, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon finely grated ginger



METHOD

1. Remove spatchcock from the fridge about 1 hour before cooking.
2. Using poultry shears, cut in half, discarding the neck and backbone.
3. Wipe the body cavity with paper towel to remove any remaining offal or blood, then cut each half into 2 pieces.
4. Combine green onion, ginger, rice wine and soy sauce in a large mixing bowl.
5. Add chicken and toss to coat well, set aside skin side down, covered at room temperature for about an hour.
6. Preheat oven to 200°C.
7. Discard marinade and transfer chicken to an oiled baking dish, skin side up.
8. Bake for 20-25 minutes, until the juices run clear when the thickest part of the thigh is pierced. Set aside in a warm place for 5 minutes.
9. Meanwhile, make Chilli Vinaigrette: Combine vinegar and sugar, stirring until sugar dissolves, stir in remaining ingredients and set aside.
10. Arrange leaves and cucumber on a plate, top with chicken and drizzle a little vinaigrette over the top.
11. Serve with remaining vinaigrette on the side.