



## Baked Spatchcock with Lemon, Garlic & Olives

This dish is inspired by my Greek friend Janni's classic slow-cooked lamb. The cooking isn't as long and slow, but the same flavours – lemon, olives, oregano and garlic – are just as delicious with chicken as they are with lamb and Janni's trick of cooking everything in an oven bag ensures a very juicy result. You can place the chicken and other ingredients in the bag 2–3 hours before cooking and refrigerate it, then remove it from the fridge an hour or so before cooking to bring it to room temperature. If you're making this dish for 4 people, use a 1.3kg chicken, double the other ingredients, and cook it for 1¼ hours. I often serve small grain shaped pasta with this dish, what the Greeks call orzo (meaning barley) and the Italians call risoni (meaning rice); sometimes just tossed with olive oil and sometimes as Janni's taught me with green onions (see video below).

**Serves 2**

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 x 600g spatchcock
- 1 teaspoon salt flakes
- ½ teaspoon dried Greek oregano
- ½ teaspoon fennel seeds
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- ½ lemon, very thinly sliced, seeds discarded
- 3 large (or 6 small) green olives, pitted and sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, very thinly sliced
- 1 oven bag
- Boiled orzo (risoni), for serving
- Skordalia, for serving (optional)



### METHOD

1. Wipe out the cavity of the spatchcock to remove any remaining offal, blood or moisture. Pat the skin dry with paper towel.
2. Combine salt, oregano, fennel and pepper and crush using a mortar and pestle or spice grinder. Mix with oil.
3. Place lemon, olives and garlic into an oven bag.
4. Rub chicken all over with the oregano mixture and place into the bag.
5. Twist or tie the top of the bag, leaving room for the air to expand as it heats.
6. Place in a baking dish with the end of the bag tucked loosely underneath or pressed against the side of the dish to hold it in place (if it's not tied), ensuring the juices can't escape.
7. Set aside for an hour or so at room temperature.
8. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
9. Place chicken in the oven for about 40 minutes, until the juices run clear when a thin metal skewer is inserted into the thickest part of the thigh.
10. Set aside to rest for 10 minutes.
11. Meanwhile, arrange orzo on a serving platter.
12. Remove chicken from the bag, reserving the other contents.
13. Cut chicken in half, discarding the back bone if you like and arrange on top of the orzo.
14. Garnish with lemon, garlic and olives, drizzle the cooking juices over the top.
15. Serve with Skordalia on the side if you like.