

GREEKISH ROAST CHICKEN WITH LEMON POTATOES



*I have a similar recipe for these roast potatoes in my cookbook *Make More With Less* which I make again and again. The original recipe is great and requires only peeling the potatoes then adding water to the tray with the olive oil, garlic, lemon and oregano so that the water cooks the potatoes and then evaporates off to crisp them up. The original recipe works perfectly if your oven is great but if not, then your chicken will steam instead of roast. I have adapted this recipe for a not-so-great oven.*

If you are barbecuing the chicken then follow the one from my book for ease!

Ingredients

Serves 4

For the chicken

- 1 x 1.6-1.8kg whole chicken
- 2 tsp fennel seeds, lightly crushed
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and black pepper

For the lemon potatoes

- 1kg Cyprus or Maris Piper potatoes, peeled and cut into wedges
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 lemon cut into large chunks
- 100ml of your best extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- Salt and black pepper

To finish

- 4 fresh apricots, halved and stoned
- 40g pine nuts

Method

- 1.** Preheat the oven to 220°C fan. Pat the chicken dry and rub all over with the olive oil, fennel seeds, oregano and a generous amount of salt and pepper. Set aside while you get the potatoes going.
- 2.** Bring a large pan of well-salted water to the boil. Add the potato wedges and parboil for 8–10 minutes until just starting to soften but still holding their shape. Drain well and leave to steam dry for a few minutes – this is what helps them crisp up properly later.
- 3.** Tip the potatoes into a large roasting tin with the smashed garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, oregano and a good amount of salt. Toss everything together. Place the chicken on top of or alongside the potatoes, or in a separate tin if you'd like them to crisp more freely and your tray isn't big enough.
- 4.** Roast for 50 minutes to an hour (depending on the size of your chicken), turning the potatoes halfway through so they are evenly crisp. The chicken should be golden and cooked through, and the potatoes are crisp and deeply golden.

For the cucumber salad

- 2 cucumbers or 4 mini cucumbers, thinly sliced into coins
- A few tbsp of Kalamata olives, pitted
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of half a lemon
- Salt and black pepper
- 150g feta, to serve

5. In the final 5–10 minutes, tuck the apricot halves cut-side up among the potatoes and scatter over the pine nuts. Return to the oven until the apricots have softened and the pine nuts are golden.

6. Remove the chicken and place in another tray to rest for 10 minutes before carving.

7. While everything finishes, toss the cucumber with the olives, olive oil and a pinch of salt.

8. Arrange the chicken on a large platter with the potatoes, apricots, pine nuts and all the roasting juices spooned over. Serve the cucumber salad and feta alongside.

To barbecue

1. Spatchcock the chicken first – sit it breast-side down and use a pair of sturdy scissors to cut along either side of the backbone and remove it, then press down firmly on the breastbone to flatten it out.

2. Rub with the same marinade and leave for at least 30 minutes, or overnight in the fridge if you have time. Parboil the potatoes as above, then toss with the garlic, lemon, oil and oregano and roast in the oven while the chicken cooks on the barbecue.

3. Cook on a medium-hot barbecue for around 40-45 minutes, turning every 10 minutes or so, until the skin is charred in places and the juices run clear when you cut into the thigh. Rest for 10 minutes before carving.

