Lemony Garlic-Herb Roast Chicken

Golden skin, lemony garlic-herb butter, and vegetables roasted in all those good chicken drippings. A little fancy, a lot festive, and easier than it looks.

Serves: 4–6
Prep time: 25 minutes
Cook time: About 1½ hours
Rest time: 15–20 minutes
Optional overnight prep: 8–24 hours

Ingredients

For the chicken

- 1 whole chicken, 4–5 lb, giblets removed
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 lemon, quartered
- 1 head garlic, halved crosswise
- A small bunch of fresh thyme

For the lemon garlic-herb butter

- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp lemon zest
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh rosemary
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

For the roasted vegetables

- 1 large onion, quartered
- 6 carrots, cut into thick chunks
- 2 fennel bulbs, trimmed and quartered
- 1–1½ lb baby potatoes, larger ones halved
- A handful of fresh thyme sprigs
- A few fresh rosemary sprigs
- Olive oil, enough to lightly coat
- Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
- Add a couple of halved oranges and lemon for extra festivity

For the white wine Dijon pan sauce

- Reserved chicken drippings, excess fat skimmed off
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1–2 tsp Dijon mustard
- Juice of ½ lemon, to taste
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- Optional: 1 tbsp cornstarch mixed with 1 tbsp cold water, for a gravy consistency
- Optional: chopped fresh parsley, to finish

Instructions

1. **Prep the chicken.** Pat the chicken thoroughly dry with paper towels. Season all over and inside the cavity with salt and pepper. For extra crispy skin, refrigerate uncovered overnight in a rimmed dish. A rack over a rimmed tray is ideal if you have the space, but this overnight step is optional.

2. **Preheat the oven.** Heat to **425°F**.

3. **Prepare the vegetables.** Place the onion, carrots, fennel, potatoes, thyme, and rosemary in a large roasting pan. Toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper, then spread evenly across the bottom.

4. **Mix the herb butter.** Combine the melted butter, olive oil, lemon juice, lemon zest, minced garlic, parsley, and rosemary. Season lightly with salt and pepper, keeping in mind that the chicken is already salted.

5. **Prepare the chicken for roasting.** Place the lemon quarters, garlic head, and thyme inside the cavity without packing tightly. Brush the outside with the herb butter. Tie the legs together with kitchen twine and tuck the wing tips underneath.

6. **Roast.** Place the chicken breast-side up over the vegetables. Roast for approximately **1½ hours**, checking from around 1 hour onward. If you'd like, spoon some pan juices over the breast halfway through. The chicken is ready when a thermometer reads **165°F in the thickest part of the breast and innermost thigh**, without touching bone. Loosely tent with foil if the skin browns too quickly.

7. **Rest the chicken and finish the vegetables.** Transfer the chicken to a platter or cutting board and loosely cover with foil. Rest for **15–20 minutes**. Reserve the pan juices for the sauce, then return the vegetables to the oven if they need more time to become tender and browned.

8. **Start the pan sauce.** Spoon off excess fat from the drippings, keeping the darker juices. In a stovetop-safe roasting pan or skillet, add the wine and scrape up the browned bits. Simmer until the wine reduces by about half.

9. **Finish the sauce.** Stir in any reserved chicken juices and **1 tsp Dijon**. Taste and add more Dijon if desired. For a gravy consistency, stir the cornstarch slurry again, then gradually whisk it into the gently simmering sauce. Start with half and simmer for **1–2 minutes** before adding more if needed. If the sauce becomes too thick or concentrated, add a splash of water.

10. **Carve and serve.** Finish the sauce with a squeeze of lemon, adding up to the juice of ½ lemon to taste. Add parsley if you'd like, check the seasoning, and serve with the carved chicken and roasted vegetables.