



engagement  
CHICKEN



# Engagement Chicken

Roast Chicken with Lemon and Herbs



*Serves 2 to 4*

1 whole chicken (approximately 4 pounds)  
½ cup fresh lemon juice, plus 3 whole lemons—including 1 sliced for garnish  
1 tablespoon kosher or coarse sea salt  
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
Fresh herbs for garnish (4 rosemary sprigs, 4 sage sprigs, 8 thyme sprigs, and 1 bunch flat-leaf parsley)

Here it is: the recipe that started it all. And once you've made it, you'll know why: It serves up the kind of home-cooked goodness that no restaurant meal can top. The chicken's crispy skin is drenched in herb-infused juices (don't forget to pour the pan drippings back over the chicken before serving or, alternately, to drizzle them over individual pieces on the plate), and the trick of turning the chicken 15 minutes into cooking keeps the meat uniquely moist.

We've suggested a complete menu on page 245, but honestly, any simple sides will work with a main course this splendid. You can go with either white wine (in which case a Riesling would be nice) or red (try pinot noir). Happy cooking—and an even happier future to you and the lucky person you've deemed worthy of this dish.

Oh, and if you have commitment issues? Skip to the next section, woman! This bird means business.

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**1.** Position an oven rack in the upper third of the oven and preheat the oven to 400°F. Remove the giblets from the chicken, wash the chicken inside and out with cold water, then let the chicken drain, cavity down, in a colander for 2 minutes.

**2.** Pat the chicken dry with paper towels. Place the chicken breast-side down in a medium roasting pan fitted with a rack and pour the lemon juice all over the chicken, both inside and out. Season the chicken all over with salt and pepper inside and out.

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3. Prick 2 whole lemons three times each in three different places with a fork and place them deep inside the cavity. Chicken cavity size may vary, so if one lemon is partly sticking out, that's fine. (Tip: If the lemons are stiff, roll them on the countertop with your palm before pricking to get the juices flowing.)

4. Put the chicken in the oven, lower the oven temperature to 350°F, and roast, uncovered, for 15 minutes.

5. Remove the roasting pan from the oven. Using tongs or two wooden spoons, turn the chicken breast-side up. Insert a meat thermometer in the thigh, and return the chicken to the oven and roast for about 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes or until the meat thermometer reads 180°F and the juices run clear when the thigh is pricked with a fork. Continue roasting if necessary. Keep in mind that cooking times in different ovens vary; roasting a chicken at 350°F takes approximately 18–20 minutes per pound, plus an additional 15 minutes.

6. Let the chicken rest for 10 minutes before carving. And here's the secret: Pour the juices from the roasting pan on top of the sliced chicken—this is the “marry me juice.” Garnish with fresh herbs and lemon slices.

### ***glamour girl tip***

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Carving a bird takes a lot of practice, so don't expect it to be perfect on your first try. The most important thing is to have a sharp knife (preferably one made specifically for carving). Start by slicing the breasts, removing as much meat as possible, and then remove the legs and the wings (using kitchen shears works well too). Don't worry if it looks messy; it will taste just as good!