

## SKILLET-ROASTED CHICKEN WITH PAN SAUCE

Phoebe Cole-Smith

serves 2-4

This chicken preparation has been in my steady rotation for i can't remember how many years now, as a result of eating it cooked this very way and asking the chef how to make it (omg, some nerve!) in an NYC restaurant that sadly no longer exists, The Red Cat. my kids pretty much grew up with my rendition of it, so while they love it unconditionally they also take it for granted. however, to the uninitiated it feels *special*, not homey weeknight “normal”, and is more than suitable to serve to your (lucky) dinner guests.

I am including a video (below) of the great Chef Jacques Pepin deboning a whole chicken — his purpose is to make a stuffed and rolled and tied and roasted boneless chicken dish called *galantine* — **YOU WILL ONLY NEED TO LEARN TO DEBONE THE CHICKEN**, none of the other steps, because you will be making my skillet-roasted chicken recipe.

What's particularly enlightening about Chef Jacques' method is that he only cuts into the chicken once along the backbone and in two places on each side — the rest is basically pulling the meat away from the bone with your hands (genius!), no knife agility needed.

However, for my recipe, i will have you go just ONE step further in the butchering process than Chef demonstrates: you will want to use your knife to open up the drumstick to expose the flesh inside rather than leaving it intact (even though it *is* now boneless) because ultimately you want your **whole chicken to lie perfectly flat in one piece with ALL the skin on one side and ALL the flesh on the other.**

**HERE'S THE VIDEO:** <https://www.thekitchn.com/jacques-pepin-deboning-chicken-video-22992315>

The worst possible thing you could do is accidentally cut off part of the chicken from the rest of the body — NO WORRIES — just lay the (deboned) piece in the pan, skin side down, to sizzle along with the rest of the chicken halves!

Once your whole chicken is fully deboned, with only the first joint of each wing left intact for presentation (or not), you will need to cut the bird in half for easier pan-roasting because you will likely use two different pans, one for each half, to insure even and thorough cooking with plenty of room for the meat to spread out and lay flat in the pan.

After all this discussion, let's put this in perspective: **the whole butchering process should take you all of 5 minutes :-D.** of course Chef Jacques makes it look like the easiest thing in the world, but practice *does* make perfect :-).

(Also, and this is important: **we are NOT spatchcocking here!** spatchcocking is a butterflied chicken with the backbone removed, other bones left intact. that is NOT what you want your butcher to do. **you want a WHOLE deboned chicken, cut in half.**)

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2-4 servings

## **INGREDIENTS**

- 1 3 1/2 lb whole chicken, deboned, skin on, cut in half (see instructions above!)
- kosher salt + freshly ground black pepper
- neutral or olive oil to coat the pan
- the juice of a lemon
- a generous splash of white wine
- 1 cup of chicken stock
- 1/2 tablespoon unsalted butter

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

1. preheat the oven to 450 degrees F
2. heat two medium to large cast-iron skillets over high heat for 2 minutes
3. season the chicken halves on both sides with salt and pepper
4. swirl in enough oil to coat the bottom of the skillets
5. when oil is hot, carefully lay one deboned half chicken in each skillet, skin side down, taking care that all of the skin comes in contact with the hot oil
6. turn the heat down to medium-high and continue cooking, checking the underside with tongs, until the skin is golden-brown, about 5 minutes
7. transfer the skillets — **DO NOT FLIP THE CHICKEN HALVES** — into the preheated oven
8. roast until the juices of both the light and the dark meat run clear, about 15 minutes
9. when done, remove chicken from skillets, and place, skin side up, on a rack placed over a sheet pan in a warm place to rest for 7-10 minutes

10. to make the pan sauce, pour most but not all of the fat from the pan into a container. set aside for another use.

11. turn the heat on the skillets down to medium, divide the lemon juice, wine and stock between the two pans and cook, stirring, to loosen all the brown bits on the bottom of the skillet. once the pan has been deglazed, transfer the liquid from one skillet to the other, so all of the sauce ingredients are in one skillet. add any juices that have collected below the resting chicken. continue to boil (raise heat if necessary) until the liquid has reduced by  $\frac{2}{3}$ . remove pan from the heat and swirl in the butter.

12. place each skillet-roasted chicken half on a plate or cut into pieces which each include some white and some dark meat. serve with the pan sauce around, not on top of, the chicken, in order to keep the skin nice and crispy.