

Pan-Seared Chicken Poussin



Chicken Poussin Recipe

A poussin is a young chicken also called coquelet, less than 28 days old at slaughter and usually weighing about a pound / 450 grams. A poussin has a delicate flavor, not dissimilar to chicken, and is tender and succulent in texture. It can be purchased at your butcher shops, farmers' markets or ordered frozen online.

Serves 2

2 x 1 lb. (450g) each chicken poussin, cleaned

1/2 Tbsp (7.5ml) peanut oil or other high smoking point oil

4 sprigs fresh thyme or 2 sprigs rosemary or use both

2 garlic cloves, unpeeled and crushed (keeping the skin on prevents garlic from burning)

4 Tbsp (60g) unsalted butter (for basting at the end of cooking).

Method

Cutting Up

Pat dry chicken with paper towels. Follow the safety handling instructions on poultry products. Using a chef knife, cut off the wings but you want to make the cut right after the joint to french it for a nicer presentation otherwise make the cut right through the joint.

To remove the legs, place the bird breast side up. Find the space that connect the thigh to the breast and make a slit with your knife. Then pull the leg, pop the bone and cut through. Do the same thing on the other side.

For the thighs: with your boning knife detach flesh from the bone. Grasp the now partially disconnected bone and pull it up and away from the thigh. Remove any unwanted bits of bone, sinew, tendons, and skin (optional for small birds though). French remaining bone if desired (save for chicken stock). Now cut the back bone off; look for the fat lane and cut through the ribs and break it off. To cut the breast in half, make a little slit first; it will help you to cut the breast into two. Save wings, back bones, bones and trimmings for your next batch of chicken stock.

Cooking

In a very hot skillet, drizzle peanut oil and sprinkle some salt. Sear chicken skin side down for about 6 minutes on medium-high heat or until it has a deep-colored sear. Flip meat and cook for 3 minutes and season with salt and pepper. Then lower heat and add the crushed garlic, thyme and butter (it won't burn if added now rather than at the beginning). Cook for 3 minutes more basting meat every now and then. Transfer breasts to a clean plate and keep warm. Allow the legs to cook 5 minutes more on low heat placing them on the side of the pan continuing basting.

Remove remaining back bone from breast and serve along with the legs.

Remove half of the fat left in the pan and sauté some veggies if desired and deglaze with some white wine. Chicken poussin can be served with many side dishes and sauces as French puree, fries, chips, gratin, grilled and sautéed veggies and so forth.