

Spatchcock Chicken

If you're like me, whenever I roast a whole chicken, either the white meat is overdone or the dark meat is underdone. It's difficult to get it all right at the same time. That is, unless you spatchcock your bird. Spatchcocking gives you a fighting chance because you're literally flattening your bird allowing all of the pieces to cook evenly. It's a great dish for welcoming the summer this Memorial Day and a lot easier to do than you think.

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4-6)

4-5 pound whole chicken

BRINE

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup kosher salt

1 orange, juiced

2 chipotle peppers

3 quarts water

CITRUS BUTTER

1 orange, zested and juiced

1 stick unsalted butter

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey or apricot jam

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cayenne

1 Tablespoon rosemary, finely chopped

salt and pepper to taste

VEGETABLES

1 pound small potatoes, cut in half

1 large carrot, sliced $\frac{1}{2}$ "

1 onion sliced

olive oil

salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

In a large pot, combine all of the brine ingredients. Bring up to a boil, then down to a simmer for 10 minutes. Allow to cool.

To spatchcock the bird, place the bird on a cutting board breast side down with the legs facing you. Make cuts along both sides of the backbone, removing it from the bird. Save the discarded piece for stock. Flip the bird over and press down on the breastbone until you hear it crack and the chicken flattens. I learned this from watching this YouTube video—gotta love the BBC. It's much easier than it looks.

Place the chicken in a large Ziploc bag and add the cooled brine. Place in refrigerator over night.

The next day, preheat your grill to 400.

In a large bowl, combine the vegetables. Drizzle with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Place in aluminum foil and seal.

Remove the chicken from the brine and pat it dry. Season both sides with salt and pepper or your favorite spice rub.

In a small saucepan, melt the butter. Take off heat and add the orange juice and zest, the honey or jam, cayenne, rosemary and salt and pepper. Whisk to combine.

Place the vegetable pouch on the grill. Brush both sides of the chicken with half of the butter mixture. Place on the grill breast side up for 20 minutes. Lower the temperature to 375 and continue to baste every 15 minutes. You want internal temperature to be 165 for white meat, 170-175 for dark. Total cook time will be between 75 minutes and two-hours depending upon size of the bird. (Average cooktime – 15 minutes per pound). Start checking with a thermometer after 75 minutes.

When the chicken is to temperature, remove from grill. Place chicken on cutting board and cover with aluminum foil. Allow it to rest for ten minutes.

Take the vegetables out of the pouch and place them on a grill pan. Cook on direct heat for 5 – 7 minutes to add a bit of char, but don't overburn.

Remove vegetables from grill and place them on the bottom of a large platter.

To serve, cut the legs and wings off the chicken, slice the breast and place neatly on top of the vegetables.