

SEMI-DEBONED CHICKEN

WITH BASIL, CHIVES, LEMON AND GARLIC

Braaiing a whole chicken can take ages,
but this simple hack of removing the carcass is a game changer.

Feeds: 4-6 • Prep: 20 minutes • Cook: 30 minutes

The Marinade

A big handful of fresh basil, chopped
A handful of fresh chives, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
¼ C olive oil
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

The Chicken

1.5 kg free-range chicken, room temperature
A sharp paring or boning knife
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the marinade, toss the basil, chives and garlic into a mortar and give it a bash with a pestle to combine. Add the olive oil, lemon zest and juice and season to taste. Give it a good mix and set it aside. If you don't have a pestle and mortar, just give it a chop and mix.

Deboning a chicken might seem tricky, but it just takes a little practice. We're only removing the carcass and the thigh bones, so think of it like taking a jacket off a hanger. Except the jacket is a chicken and the hanger is the carcass.

Start with the backbone facing up on your chopping board. Run a sharp knife along each side of the spine. Pick a side to start with, then run the tip of the knife in your initial cut and begin paring the meat off the carcass. Take your time with it, you'll get the feel for it. Slice through the thigh joint to release it from the carcass. You can snap the wing joints to make it easier to access the breast meat. Work the breast meat off the carcass until you've got the entire side off, then start on the other side. Once you've got both sides of the meat off the carcass, pull the carcass out and discard. Next, find the thigh bones and make a small cut on each side of the bones, then use your knife to work the bones free. Congratulations! You've just semi-deboned your first chicken.

Season the chicken on both sides with salt and pepper, then use three-quarters of the marinade and cover the chicken evenly. Place the bird skin-side down on a tray and fold it back into shape. This is how you're going to braai it. Transfer the chicken to a flip grid and braai over medium-hot coals for roughly 5 minutes per side for 20 minutes. At the 20-minute mark, brush the rest of the marinade on both sides of the chicken and braai for another 5 minutes per side. When the internal temperature hits 75 °C, it's done. Let the chicken rest for at least 10 minutes, then slice and serve.



