

Poulet au citron

Lemon chicken

I first tasted this dish in a Belgian restaurant at Expo '70 in Japan and found it exquisite. I have reproduced the recipe from memory and think I have been successful. It is simple, but are not simple recipes so often they can be enjoyed all year round but particularly in the summer season.

- 2 fresh chickens weighing 2 lb (1 kg) each
- 2½ oz (75 g) softened butter
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- shredded zest of 2 lemons
- 4 lumps of sugar
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice, strained
- ½ cup (120 ml) chicken stock (see next page) or water
- 1 teaspoon potato flour
- 1 tablespoon water

Graeme's comment

*Extra lemon juice has good results.
(3 large lemons & zest for 1 chook)*

Remove all the fat possible from the birds.

Coat each bird evenly with the softened butter and place them on a rack in an oven previously heated to 450°F / 225°C. Turn the birds at intervals to brown on all sides. Cook for about 45 minutes basting occasionally - reduce the heat if they are browning too quickly. When tender or when clear juice runs when tested with a fine skewer, remove from the oven, season and keep warm.

Put the sugar cubes, lemon zest and water in a small heavy saucepan. Allow the cubes to melt and lightly caramelize over gentle heat taking care not to burn. Remove the saucepan from the heat and add the strained juice, cover and set aside.

Tilt the roasting pan and remove the fat that collects in the corner. A bulb baster is most efficient for doing this. When degreased, place the pan on the stove, add the stock and all the crusty bits off the bottom. Add the lemon juice mixture and thicken with the potato flour mixed with water, correct seasoning and pour the sauce over the chickens before serving.

Serves 6-8

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... / *Chicken stock*

Chicken Stock

- ½ kg chicken
- 1 small leek (white part only)
- 1 carrot
- 1 medium onion
- bouquet garni
- salt and pepper

Note: Use the chicken afterwards for a salad dish.

Put the chicken in a heavy pot, just big enough to hold it. Cover with cold water, add salt and bring slowly to the boil, removing any scum that rises. Add the leek, carrot, onion and bouquet garni. Add freshly ground pepper.

Cover the pot and simmer the chicken until it is tender. Allow it to cool. Refrigerate. The next day, remove any fat from the surface of the stock. Warm the chicken to melt the jellied stock, remove the chicken and strain the stock.