

# December Culinary Corner

I find myself spending a little time each day trolling the internet and the library looking for new and old ideas about food. It could be regional (Argentinean BBQ), ethnic (Asian), an ingredient (celeriac) or in this case, a new way to accomplish a task.

There is an axiom that says that taste begins long before anything reaches your mouth. I was working with something else when I got a look at the picture. You can see the flavor resting on and under the chicken. You can also see that the bird is "butterflied" that is, the backbone is removed. All good reasons to jump to the recipe and see what was happening!!

This was all on a blog I have mentioned before FOOD52. The subject was roasting chicken. I have been recently reviewing techniques other than the old reliable "Beer can". Amanda is one of the primary editors and she covers some of the background in the dish. This is one that has everything. The meat comes out moist, the skin is crispy, it is easy to carve, and you have a great basis for a sauce. ( I did make on change and went to Meyer lemons to drop the bitterness.)

Enjoy,

Frank Koterba



## **Spatchcocked and Braise Roasted Chicken**

About a decade ago, I went to a cooking demonstration at Macy's by Christopher Hirscheimer. She showed the crowd her trick for making it easy to carve roasted chicken -- she simply cut out the chicken's backbone before roasting, then she reshaped the bird and trussed it to hold it together. Spatchcocking is a similar technique except instead of re-shaping the bird, you flatten it, making it possible to grill or saute a bird in one layer. Fast forward to this fall. At a dinner with some fellow food52ers in Boston, our conversation touched on chef Gordon Hammersley's technique of "braise-roasting" poultry -- where he submerges the meat in broth and leaves the skin exposed to the oven heat. I thought it was time to get in the kitchen to try the combo of spatchcocking and braise-roasting. As usual, rather than do any research, I winged it, occasionally calling out to Merrill for advice. Here are the results!

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## (Spatchcocked Cont.)

### Serves 4

One 4 to 4 1/2 pound chicken  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 1/2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil  
2 large shallots, sliced  
4 garlic cloves, lightly smashed (skins left on)  
2 rosemary sprigs  
8 sage leaves  
1/2 cup fino sherry or dry white wine  
About 1 cup chicken broth  
1 lemon, cut into thin slices (skin left on; seeds discarded)



### Method:

1. Heat the oven to 425 degrees. Using poultry shears, cut the backbone out of the chicken. Reserve the backbone. Turn the chicken skin-side-up and press down on the breast bone to flatten the chicken. Generously season the chicken all over.
2. In a casserole pan or other low shallow pan large enough to fit the flattened chicken, melt the butter in the oil over medium high heat. When the foam subsides, add the chicken skin-side-down, and the backbone, and brown well, 4 to 6 minutes. Remove to a plate. Pour off all but 1 1/2 tablespoons fat.
3. Set the pan back on the stove. Add the shallots and garlic, and cook over medium heat until the shallot has softened, about 2 minutes. Add the rosemary, sage and sherry. Increase the heat and boil off nearly all the sherry. Add 1 cup chicken broth and the lemon slices. Gently lower the chicken back into the pan, again skin-side up.
4. If needed, add more broth to come 1/2-inch up the side of the pan. Transfer the pan to the oven, and braise-roast until the chicken is cooked through (an internal temperature of 165 degrees), 30 to 50 minutes.
5. Transfer the chicken to a cutting board and let rest for 10 minutes -- uncovered, or the skin will soften! Carve the bird. Strain the pan juices and adjust the seasoning. Serve bird and cooked-down broth, and enjoy!

