

JAMAICA

HOME-MADE JERK CHICKEN

This is a fun way to cook a whole chook – succulent, zingy and smoky!

Ingredients

Jerk marinade:

1 Tegel whole chicken – butterfly by making a cut down the back bone and flattening

1 medium onion, chopped

2 spring onions

12 whole allspice

2 tbsp grated fresh ginger

2 bay leaves

1 tbsp fresh thyme

3 cloves garlic

2 tbsp soy sauce

2 small scotch bonnet peppers (or other hot peppers/chillies)

Juice from 2 limes

2 tbsp cooking oil

Water if you need to thin sauce

Jerk sauce:

¼ c left-over marinade (above)

½ c tomato sauce

1 T soy sauce

Make the jerk marinade by putting all ingredients in a blender or mortar and pestle and blending until smooth.

Slash chicken thighs and legs to help with cooking and then smother with the marinade (save ¼ cup of this for sauce, see below) and leave for as long as you can. Place in a roasting dish and cover with foil, cook for 40 minutes at 200C. Remove foil and cook for a further 15-20 minutes or until the chicken is well browned and fully cooked.

Jerk sauce: put remaining marinade in a saucepan with tomato and soy sauce; bring to the boil for 5-7 minutes until thickened. Chop chicken roughly and serve with jerk sauce and rice and peas.

Or build your own Jamaican pit oven!

Take a roasting dish and in one corner build a small pile of twigs” - I use small branches of bay tree, rosemary and sage stalks. Balance a wire rack over the top and place your butterflied, marinated chicken on this. Cover and seal tightly with foil, remembering what corner your twig pile is! Now place the corner (with the twigs on it) of the tray on the stove top over an element/burner turned to a medium heat. Be patient and leave until you can hear the crackling of your smoldering branches. Once this has died down, put the whole tray into a hot (200 C) oven, and leave to cook for a further 30 minutes.

Remove the foil carefully (to prevent a steam burn!) and continue cooking until the chicken is well browned and cooked through – another 15-20 minutes.