

Baked Chicken With Potatoes, Cherry Tomatoes and Herbs

By **Julia Moskin**

Time 1¼ hours

Rating ★★☆☆☆ (1680)



David Malosh for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews

For this simple bake of chicken, potatoes and tomatoes, Julia Moskin borrowed a technique from the Italian island of Ischia, where rosemary, fennel and other herbs grow wild in the hills. Because the island was formed by volcanic activity (Pompeii is just under 20 miles away), it has natural hot springs, and the sand on some of its beaches is as hot as 350 degrees. When cooking fuel was scarce and expensive, the islanders learned to use the sand as a heat source for cooking. Wrapping the ingredients tightly and subjecting them to steady heat produces a succulent, aromatic dish. If you prefer to brown the ingredients, take the final step of uncovering the pan.

INGREDIENTS

Yield: 4 servings

1 (3- to 4-pound) chicken, cut up, or
3 to 4 pounds bone-in, skin-on
chicken thighs

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon rosemary leaves (from
about 2 sprigs)

Kosher salt and black pepper

2 small dried red chiles, crumbled,
or ½ teaspoon red-pepper flakes

2 to 3 pounds large Yukon Gold
potatoes, quartered

12 ounces cherry or grape tomatoes

PREPARATION

Step 1

Pull any lumps of fat off the chicken and discard. In a bowl, combine chicken, 2 tablespoons olive oil, ½ tablespoon rosemary, 2 teaspoons salt, ½ teaspoon pepper and the chiles. Mix and set aside, at least 30 minutes at room temperature or up to 8 hours in the refrigerator.

Step 2

Heat oven to 450 degrees. In a 9-by-13-inch baking dish or a large ovenproof skillet with a lid, combine the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil and ½ tablespoon rosemary, potatoes, tomatoes, onion and a generous sprinkling of salt and pepper. Toss and spread out evenly in the pan. Arrange chicken pieces on top, skin-side up. Add the wine, pouring along the edges of the pan, and place basil sprigs on top. Cover tightly, and bake for 30 minutes.

Step 3

1 large yellow onion, quartered and thickly sliced

¼ cup dry white wine

4 to 6 basil sprigs, plus 2 tablespoons finely shredded leaves, for garnish

Remove chicken from the oven and turn the oven temperature to 475 degrees. (Use the convection feature if you have it.) Or heat the broiler and arrange oven rack about 8 inches from the heat. Return uncovered pan to oven and cook until chicken skin is browned, cooking liquid is reduced and vegetables are very soft, 10 to 15 minutes more.

Step 4

Discard basil sprigs. Garnish with shredded basil and serve immediately.

Tip

AND TO DRINK ... Few dishes are more versatile with wine than roasted or baked chicken. The addition of fresh tomatoes here suggests starting with a dry white wine. The choices are many: perhaps a St.-Aubin from Burgundy, or a fairly restrained American chardonnay. You could circumnavigate the Mediterranean, picking out bottles from Corsica, Sardinia, Campania, Liguria, Sicily, Greece and so on. Or if you wanted a rosé, you could take the same geographical journey, adding the south of France to the itinerary. You could try a crisp California rosé, or a pinot gris from Oregon. If you did want a red, I'd start in Beaujolais, which has a special affinity for chicken. I would also consider easygoing Burgundies or American pinot noirs, as well as some unusual Loire reds like gamay or pineau d'Aunis. ERIC ASIMOV

Private Notes

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