

CRISPY LEMON-THYME ROAST CHICKEN WITH YUKON POTATOES

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

1 4-6 pound chicken
8-10 small to medium Yukon gold potatoes, cleaned
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 stick (½ cup) unsalted butter, softened
salt & pepper, to taste
2 lemons (seedless varieties are best)
2 teaspoons fresh thyme
Fresh rosemary, to taste (optional)

DIRECTIONS

4 to 6 hours prior to cooking time, prep your chicken. Spatchcock it, then remove the knobby ankle from the drumstick and clip off the tips of the wings past the elbows. Salt the underside of chicken, then gently break the membrane under the breast and thigh skin so as to salt generously underneath the skin. Place chicken in refrigerator, covered loosely with paper towel. Remove from refrigerator 1 hour before cooking.

FROM LORETTA'S SONOMA TABLE

Preheat oven to 450°. Add the oil to a 12-inch cast-iron skillet. Slice Yukon gold potatoes into even $\frac{3}{4}$ -to-1-inch-thick round slices and arrange them in the skillet. Place pan over medium heat to brown potatoes.

While potatoes are browning, zest the lemons and set them aside. Mix soft butter, salt, pepper, lemon zest and thyme together to form a paste. Slather generously under chicken breast skin; slather any remaining paste under the leg skin. Slice the zested lemons as thinly as possible and remove any seeds. Slide lemon slices under chicken skin.

In the skillet, flip the potatoes so the brown sides face up, and place the chicken on the bed of potatoes, breast up. Roast in oven, keeping an eye on the skin and adjusting heat down to 400°-425° if it appears to be browning too quickly. When a thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the thigh registers 165° (approximately 40 minutes), remove chicken and place on wire rack. Keeping potatoes in skillet, pour out excess fat and butter, leaving some for crisping. Place skillet over medium-high heat and brown potatoes, turning them as needed. Remove from heat when potatoes are crisp on both sides.

Sprinkle with salt and rosemary before serving.
