

14a Simple jerk chicken

Serves 4

The chicken is best marinated in the jerk paste for about 3 hours before cooking so you need to plan ahead if you are cooking this recipe.

Ingredients

4 chicken thigh pieces, skin-on, bone-on
4 chicken drumsticks
4 tablespoons jerk spice paste

To serve (optional)

1 lime cut into quarters

1. Lay the chicken pieces into a wide shallow ceramic dish. Make 2 or 3 slashes in each piece of chicken then wash your hands and spoon the 4 tablespoons of jerk paste over the chicken. Using a metal spoon and fork, turn the chicken pieces over in the marinade until all the pieces are coated. Cover and refrigerate, for about 3 hours.
2. When you're ready to cook, preheat your oven to 170 degrees C fan. Arrange the chicken pieces on baking paper on a shallow roasting tin and bake for 30 minutes until tender and cooked through.
3. Serve with lime wedges for squeezing over the chicken; rice and peas; and your favourite salad (eg crisp shredded lettuce or grated carrot or coleslaw).

Note 1

You will find jerk spice paste in the herb and spice section of your local supermarket. Sainsbury's do their own brand in a small jar in the Speciality Foods section and also stock Levi Root's brand in a pouch. Both of these are good but the Levi Roots paste is extremely hot so I suggest using it sparingly as set out in the recipe above rather than using all the contents of the pouch. I've also tried Dunn River brand which comes in a jar and is stocked by Tesco. I thought this tasted acidic and unpleasant so I haven't recommended it.

Note 2

Uncooked chicken contains bacteria which can contaminate other foods and is a major cause of food poisoning. Take special care when you are handling the chicken pieces, wash your hands before and after handling the chicken and make sure the raw chicken is covered with cling film and is positioned carefully in the fridge so that it doesn't cross-contaminate any other foods in the fridge.

Note 3

This recipe is called Simple Jerk Chicken as it uses ready made jerk marinade. One of the “rules” of the Bowdon cookery course is that there are no more than 10 ingredients in each recipe and that no electrical or special kitchen equipment is needed. If however you fancy having a go at making your own jerk marinade and have a food processor, here’s a good version taken from a John Torode recipe on BBC Good Food website:

Jerk marinade

Ingredients

1 big bunch spring onion, roughly chopped
thumb sized piece ginger, peeled and roughly chopped
3 garlic cloves
half a small onion
3 Scotch bonnet chillis, halved and deseeded
half teaspoon dried thyme or 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
juice 1 lime
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
3 tablespoons brown sugar
1 tablespoon ground allspice
1 teaspoon salt

Combine all the marinade ingredients in a food processor and blend to a thick paste. You will probably need to stop the motor, open the lid and scrape down the ingredients with a spatula from time to time. If you like you can carefully taste the mixture and add more sugar, lime juice, salt or chillis until it is balanced to your liking.

The quantities listed above make loads of marinade so either you can double up on the chicken or freeze half of the marinade. Do not be tempted to freeze and re-use marinade after it’s been used on raw chicken because of the risk of food poisoning.