**The Perfect Roasted Chicken**

**Ingredients**

* 1 (3 ½ - 4) pound roasting chicken
* 1 stick of Challenge Salted Butter, divided
* 1 teaspoon each of salt and pepper
* 2 tablespoons of fresh lemon juice
* 1 tablespoon of Dijon mustard

**Directions**

1. Place roasting pan in oven. Preheat pan and oven to 350 degrees.
2. Reserve 1 tablespoon of butter for the pan sauce, divide the remaining stick in half. Soften the first half of the stick, melt the second half.
3. To prepare chicken, carefully separate the skin on breast from meat. Try to keep the center portion intact, this will keep the skin in place while cooking and protect the meat. Place the softened butter under the skin on the breast, making sure the entire breast is covered.
4. Brush the entire chicken with the melted butter. Season all sides with the salt and pepper.
5. Place chicken on a V-rack on its side, thigh, drumstick and wing facing up. Set the rack on the preheated roasting pan. Roast for 15-20 minutes, then turn the chicken over and repeat on the second side.
6. Remove chicken, and place it breast side up on the V-rack. Place chicken back into oven and turn up the heat to 450. Roast for 25-30 minutes, or until an instant read thermometer reads 170 degrees when inserted into the thigh. Let chicken rest for at least 10 minutes before serving.
7. To create pan sauce, remove pan drippings and place into a sauce pan. You can strain the drippings and remove excess fat if desired. Stir in lemon juice and Dijon . Taste to see if more salt or pepper is needed. Once well incorporated, whisk in the reserved tablespoon of butter. Serve sauce with the roasted chicken.

**After you mastered a basic chicken, why not give this version a try!**

**Lemon Rosemary Roasted Chicken with Sweet Potatoes**

**Ingredients**

* 1 stick of Challenge Salted Butter, softened
* 1 teaspoon each of salt and pepper
* 2 tablespoon of fresh lemon juice, plus the zest from one lemon
* 2 tablespoons of fresh rosemary, diced
* 4 cloves of crushed garlic
* 1 (3 ½ - 4) pound roasting chicken
* 4 cups of sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 2 inch cubes (golden potatoes can be substituted)

**Directions**

1. Combine butter, salt and pepper, lemon juice and zest with garlic.
2. To prepare chicken, carefully separate the skin on breast from meat. Try to keep the center portion intact, this will keep the skin in place while cooking and protect the meat. Place half the softened butter mixture under the skin on the breast, making sure the entire breast is covered. Melt the remaining butter, and brush the surface of the chicken.
3. Place chicken on a V-rack on its side, thigh, drumstick and wing facing up. Set the rack on the preheated roasting pan, add cubed sweet potatoes. Roast for 15-20 minutes, then turn the chicken over and repeat on the second side.
4. Remove chicken, and place it breast side up on the V-rack. Place chicken back into oven and turn up the heat to 450. Roast for 25-30 minutes, or until an instant read thermometer reads 170 degrees when inserted into the thigh. Let chicken rest for at least 10 minutes before serving.

**Chef Tips**

* Cooking a whole chicken can be intimidating. It is a challenge since you have two different types of meat that cook differently. This technique may take some extra time, but it solves those problems. Heating your roasting pan, and cooking the chicken on its side first, help insure an evenly cooked chicken. Starting the chicken at a low temperature, then raising it, gives it that picture perfect crispy skin.
* When selecting a chicken, look for a ‘natural roasting chicken.’ This means the chicken should not be injected with any seasoning or salt. You also want one that is around 3 ½ to 4 pounds. If larger, adjust your cook time.
* When doing a simple recipe that does doesn’t require too many items, make sure to use good quality ingredients such as Challenge Butter. The milk solids in the butter give you lots of flavor, and allows for that deep golden brown skin. The butter fat helps keep the chicken moist and tender.
* Once you master the basic recipe, feel free to add your own special touch! Soften the butter and stir in fresh herbs, shallots or your favorite seasoning mix instead of the salt and pepper. Prepare and cook the chicken as directed in recipe.
* Since you have the oven on, why not prepare two chickens to get ready for meal planning during the week. For inspiration, check out our recipes for some great ideas to use that leftover chicken!

**Intro:**

After years of roasting chickens, I have come up with the perfect technique. There are many methods out there, but I have found that the breast meat will be dry, the chicken will be undercooked, or the skin will be undesirable. My method solves these problems, addressing the cooking issues when roasting a whole chicken. I create a deep golden brown crispy skin, moist and juicy breast meat, and the dark meat is cooked all the way through. I always make two chickens so I can start on meal planning for the rest of the week. This method takes a few extra steps, but the results are amazing!