



Balinese Roasted Chicken

SERVES 4

In Indonesia sambals are sauces made from pounded chiles and other fresh ingredients like garlic and ginger. Sometimes they are cooked and sometimes they are left raw. Either way, they add a punch of flavor to any dish they are served with. One of my favorite sambals is made with mostly green ingredients, and I use it in many different ways. It's delicious on its own with peanut crackers or raw vegetables, but it's also tasty cooked into stews and roasted meats. Traditionally, the sambal is blended with a mortar and pestle, but it's easiest to pulse it in a food processor. For this recipe, I like to spatchcock the chicken, which means removing the backbone, so the chicken lies flat in the pan. This helps it cook faster and more evenly. Rub the green sambal under the skin of a whole chicken and spread it on the outer skin before roasting it in a very hot oven. The skin comes out crispy like crackers, while the meat inside is tender and full of green flavors from the sambal. If there's any chicken left over after dinner, shred it and make a chicken salad with mayonnaise and more sambal.

INGREDIENTS

CHICKEN:

1 whole chicken, cleaned and patted dry

1 teaspoon Morton kosher salt

3 stalks lemongrass, white center only, finely chopped

4 makrut lime leaves

1/4 cup shallots, minced

SAMBAL:

4 garlic cloves, minced

2 tablespoons fresh ginger, minced

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

juice of one lime

1/4 cup vegetable oil (or coconut oil)

PROCESS:

Sambal:

Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.

In the bowl of a food processor, add the garlic, ginger, lemongrass, lime leaves, shallots, salt, and lime juice. Pulse ten times until blended, but still a coarse paste. Slowly add the oil while still pulsing until mixture comes together.

Meanwhile, prepare a roasting pan by lining the bottom of the pan with aluminum foil (to help with clean-up). Cover the pan with a roasting rack or baking rack. Spray with non-stick baking spray.



Chicken:

Place the chicken on a board with the breast side down. Using kitchen shears, cut up one side of the backbone to the neck opening. Then cut up the other side of the backbone until it releases. Keep the bone to use in stock at another time.

Turn the chicken over and using the palms of your hands, press down on the breastbone to flatten the chicken as much as possible. Slide your fingers between the meat and the skin, working slowly to separate as much of the skin from the meat as you can. Scoop some of the sambal into your hands and rub underneath the skin. Massage the outside of the skin to distribute the sambal into the meat, including the breasts, thighs, and legs.

Rub the remaining sambal over the outside of the chicken, then sprinkle with a teaspoon of salt. Place the chicken on the roasting pan and put in the center of the preheated oven and roast for 50 minutes. Using a meat thermometer, test the internal temperature of the breast to make sure it has reached 150 degrees.

Remove chicken from the oven and let it rest for 10 minutes before serving.