



FROM OUR *FLAVORS OF CALIFORNIA* COOKBOOK

# Herb-Brined Roast Chicken

**MAKES 4-6 SERVINGS**

## **HERBED BRINE**

4 cups/910 ml cool water

1/2 cup/75 g kosher salt, preferably Diamond Crystal® (see Note)

1/3 cup/65 g granulated sugar

3 Tbsp packed light brown sugar

2 Tbsp ground coriander seeds (use an electric spice grinder or a mortar and pestle)

4 tsp dried oregano

3 garlic cloves, crushed under the flat of a knife and peeled

2 sprigs fresh rosemary, about 6 in./15 cm each

4 cups/960 ml ice water

## **ROASTED CHICKEN**

1 roasting chicken, about 6 lb./2.7 kg, fat pads, and giblets removed

2 Tbsp softened butter plus 2 Tbsp melted butter

2 sprigs fresh rosemary, about 6 in./15 cm each

1 tsp freshly ground black pepper

1 lemon, halved

2 garlic cloves, crushed under the flat of a knife and peeled

## **PAN SAUCE**

1/4 cup/60 ml dry vermouth or white wine

3/4 cup/180 ml water

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. To Make the Brine:** Bring the water, salt, granulated sugar, brown sugar, coriander, oregano, garlic, and rosemary to a boil in a medium saucepan over high heat, stirring to dissolve the salt and sugar. Remove from the heat and let steep until lukewarm, about 1 hour. Add the ice water and stir until the ice is almost melted.
- 2.** Place the chicken, breast side down, in a large bowl or deep plastic container. Pour in the brine. (The brine should barely cover the chicken. If necessary, add more brine in the proportions of 2 cups/480 ml water, 2 Tbsp kosher salt, and 1 Tbsp each granulated and brown sugar, whisked to dissolve the salt and sugar.) Cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours or up to 12 hours.
- 3.** Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 400°F/200°C. Place a V-shaped roasting rack inside a medium roasting pan.
- 4.** Drain the chicken well and pat completely dry with paper towels. Slip your fingers under the skin on both sides of the breast to loosen it from the flesh. Spread the softened butter under the loosened skin and add a rosemary sprig to each side. Sprinkle the body cavity with the pepper. Add the lemon halves and garlic to the cavity. Drizzle the melted butter over the chicken and massage the butter all over the chicken skin. Place the chicken, breast side down, on the rack in the pan.
- 5.** Roast for 30 minutes. Turn the chicken breast side up and continue roasting until the skin is golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the thigh, not touching bone, reads 170°F/77°C, 1 to 1 1/4 hours. The drippings should be dark brown but not burned. If necessary, add 1/4 cup/60 ml water to the pan to prevent scorching. Tilt the chicken, so the cavity juices run into the pan. Transfer the chicken to a platter, tent with aluminum foil to keep warm, and let stand for 10 minutes.
- 6. To Make the Pan Sauce:** Pour the drippings out of the pan into a liquid measuring cup and let them stand for 3 minutes. Skim off and discard the clear yellow fat on the surface. Heat the pan over high heat on the stove until the pan juices are sizzling. Add the vermouth and scrape up the browned bits in the pan. Add the water and bring to a boil. Cook, stirring often, until slightly reduced, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat. Pour into a small sauceboat. (You are unlikely to need any seasoning because of the salt in the brine.)
- 7.** Carve the chicken, discarding the lemon, rosemary, and garlic. Serve with the sauce.

## NOTE

We use Diamond Crystal® brand kosher salt (sold in a red box). Other brands have a different texture that will measure differently. If you use Morton® kosher salt (sold in a dark blue box), use one-third less.