

Braised Chicken with Forty Cloves of Garlic

<http://userealbutter.com/2014/10/22/braised-chicken-forty-cloves-garlic-recipe/>
from *Fine Cooking*

4 lbs. chicken, whole or pieces (I used whole legs)
kosher salt
black pepper, freshly ground
1/2 lemon
1/4 tsp sweet Hungarian paprika
2 tbsps olive oil
40 cloves garlic, peeled or unpeeled (up to you)
1/2 cup dry white wine
2 sprigs fresh thyme
2 sprigs fresh rosemary (I prefer 1)
2 sprigs flat-leaf parsley
1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
baguette for serving

Preheat the oven to 400°F and set the rack in the center. Pat the chicken dry, season (both inside and out if whole chicken) with 2 teaspoons of salt and 1 teaspoon of pepper, then sprinkle paprika over it. Squeeze the lemon juice into a vessel and reserve. If preparing a whole chicken, place the used lemon half in the cavity. Heat the olive oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, place the chicken breast-side or meaty-side down and brown for about 2 minutes. Flip the bird (ha!) and brown another 2-3 minutes. Remove the chicken to a plate and drain off the oil in the pot (but keep the brown bits!). Return the pot to medium-high heat. Add the garlic cloves and the wine, stirring the bottom of the pot to deglaze the fond. Place the chicken in the pot on top of the garlic, with the breast-side or meaty-side up. Add the herbs and broth. Bring to a boil. Cover the pot and transfer it to the oven.

Bake for 45 minutes to an hour, basting every 20 minutes, until a meat thermometer registers 160°F in the thickest part (usually the thigh). Remove the cover and let the chicken cook for another 10 minutes or until the thermometer reads 165°-170°F. Move the chicken and garlic to a plate. I reserved about 10 of the garlic cloves to mash for the gravy. Discard the solids from the pot and defat the drippings. My favorite method for defatting the drippings is to let them cool a bit, then pour everything into a gallon ziploc bag. Hold by one of the top corners so everything collects in a bottom corner. In a minute or so, the fat will rise to the top. Hold the bag over your pot (but low enough so it doesn't squirt all over the work area) and take a sharp knife to puncture the bottom corner. Let the drippings drain into the pot (use the knife tip to move any pepper bits that might clog it up) and then pinch it closed with your fingers before the fat drains out. Discard the bag and the fat.

Stir the mashed garlic into the drippings. Bring the drippings to a boil over medium-high heat then reduce to a simmer. Simmer for 5 minutes. Season the gravy with salt, pepper, and lemon juice to taste. Serve with the chicken (carved or as pieces) and toasted slices of baguette. Serves 4-6.