

CHICKEN STUFFED WITH HERB MÉLANGE

Serves 4

Boosting the flavor of mild-tasting poultry by forcing a mixture of herbs and seasonings into the pocket between the skin and meat of a bird is an old and delicious chef's trick. It can be done with a whole bird, or even on a small scale such as with the chicken breasts here. Fresh garlic, oregano, parsley and rosemary counterbalance the woody aroma and taste from the plank. To round out the meal, serve the roasted chicken breasts and vegetables with a rice pilaf cooked with chicken broth and tossed with baby peas.

HERB MÉLANGE

1 lemon
1/3 cup olive oil
1/4 cup minced fresh garlic (about 12 cloves)
2 tablespoons minced fresh oregano
2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
2 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar

4 (about 6-ounces each) bone-in chicken breast halves

Olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

VEGETABLES

2 cups carrots, peeled and sliced diagonally 1/4-inch thick
1 cup sliced leeks, white part only

Heat oven and plank to 400 F.

Grate the peel from the lemon; squeeze juice into a medium-size bowl. Mix the lemon peel and juice with the remaining herb mixture ingredients.

Rub the chicken with oil; season with salt and pepper. Loosen the skin and spoon the herb mixture underneath, massaging paste into space between chicken meat and skin. Reserve 1/4 cup of the herb paste; toss with vegetables until well coated.

Spread the vegetables in the center of the heated plank; top with the chicken. Roast for 35 to 40 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink in center and the juices run clear.

SIDE BAR

COOK'S NOTE: Never leave a roasting plank in the oven unattended. If the plank begins to smoke excessively, turn down the oven temperature. If this is necessary, know that it will take a bit longer for the poultry to reach doneness. Check for doneness by cutting into the meat near the bone; it's done when the chicken is no longer pink in center and the juices run clear.