



## MY MOTHER'S PRAISED CHICKEN

**Serves: 4-8**

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This may well be - indeed is - the smell, the taste, the dish that says "family" to me and my siblings, and brings our long-absent mother back to the kitchen and the table with us. But the fact that I've cooked it more often and over more years than I've cooked anything else doesn't make writing a recipe for it any easier. If anything, it makes it harder, much harder.

**Recipe posted by Nigella**

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### Ingredients

1 large chicken (preferably organic)  
2 teaspoons garlic infused olive oil  
100 ml white wine  
2 - 3 leeks (cleaned, trimmed & cut into 7cm logs)  
2 - 3 carrots (peeled & cut into batons)  
1 - 2 sticks celery (sliced)  
approx. 2 litres cold water  
1 bouquet garni (or 1 teaspoon dried herbs)  
1 small bunch fresh parsley  
2 teaspoons sea salt  
2 teaspoons red peppercorns (or 2 teaspoons red peppercorns)  
english mustard  
chopped fresh dill

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### Method

1. Get out a large, flame-safe cooking pot (with a lid) in which the chicken can fit snugly: mine is about 28cm wide x 10cm deep / 11inches wide x 4 inches deep.
2. On a washable board, un-truss the chicken, put it breast-side down and press down until you hear the breastbone crack. (As you may imagine, I like this.) Then press down again, so that the chicken is flattened slightly. Now cut off the ankle joints below the drumstick (but keep them); I find kitchen scissors up to the task.
3. Put the oil in the pan to heat, then brown the chicken for a few minutes breast-side down, and turn up the heat and turn over the chicken, tossing in the feet as you do so. Still over a vigorous heat add the wine or vermouth to the pan and let it bubble down a little before adding the leeks, carrots and celery.
4. Pour in enough cold water to cover the chicken, though the very top of it may poke out, then pop in the bouquet garni or your herbs of choice, and the parsley stalks (if I have a bunch, I cut the stalks off to use here, but leave them tied in the rubber band) or parsley sprigs.
5. The chicken should be almost completely submerged by now and if not, do add some more cold water. You want it just about covered.
6. Bring to a bubble, clamp on the lid, turn the heat to very low and leave to cook for 1½–2 hours. I tend to give it 1½ hours, or 1 hour 40 minutes, then leave it to stand with the heat off, but the lid still on, for the remaining 20–30 minutes.
7. Serve the chicken and accompanying vegetables with brown basmati rice, adding a ladleful or two of liquid over each shallow bowl, as you go, and putting fresh dill and mustard on the table for the eaters to add as they wish.

Additional information - for gluten free serve with a gluten free mustard, such as Dijon.

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