

Ras El Hanout Roast Chicken

This is not just Ras El Hanout Roast Chicken. No siree. This is Ras El Hanout Roast Chicken and potatoes, dripping in a sweet & tangy marmalade, olive, parsley and preserved lemon butter and topped with a sharp, sumac & red onion pickle. This is also recipe number 601 and a very proud moment for me. This recipe was totally off the top of my head, no books, magazines or cooking shows for inspiration. This is 100% an Em's Food creation and I have to say, it was really. Bloody. Good.

For this recipe I used my own Ras El Hanout recipe. It is a Middle Eastern Spice Blend and I always keep a jar of it in the cupboard as it is perfect with all meats, seafood and even veggies. It is simply a matter of throwing a bunch of spices in a jar and giving it a good shake! You can buy a store bought version if you prefer.

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 1 Hour

\$\$ Medium Budget

Serves 4

For the Ras El Hanout Roast Chicken:

2 tbs of Ras El Hanout

2 tbs of olive oil

4 chicken marylands, leg cut from thigh at the joint

12 baby potatoes, halved

Sea salt & Pepper

1/2 a cup of unsalted pistachio nuts, toasted in a dry pan and roughly chopped

Flat leaf parsley leaves for garnish

Fresh steamed greens of your choice to serve (I used green beans)

For the Marmalade, Olive, Parsley & Preserved Lemon Butter:

100gm of unsalted butter, at room temperature

1 tbs of orange marmalade (I used Beerenberg brand but any will do)

12 Sicilian pitted green olives, chopped finely

2 wedges of Preserved Lemon, flesh discarded & skins finely chopped

A handful of flat leaf parsley leaves, finely chopped

A little sea salt & cracked pepper

For the Sumac Onion Pickle:

1 red onion, peeled and sliced into thin rings

2 tsp of Sumac

2 tbs of olive oil

Juice of 1/2 a lemon

Pre heat the oven to 180°C.

To prepare the Ras El Hanout Roast Chicken, place the olive oil and Ras el Hanout spice blend in a large shallow tray, season with salt and pepper and mix to combine. Pop the chicken pieces and potatoes in the pan and use your hands to massage the spiced oil into the chicken and potatoes so they are really well coated.

Heat a large oven proof pan or casserole dish and drizzle with a touch more oil. Fry the chicken pieces until golden on all sides (you may need to do it in batches). Once the chicken is browned, pop it all back in the pan and dot the potatoes around the chicken pieces. Bake in the oven for approximately 50 minutes or until the potatoes are tender and golden brown.

While the chicken is cooking, make the sumac & onion pickle. Place the oil, sumac and lemon juice in a bowl and mix to combine. Separate the onion rings with your fingers and toss them through the sumac mixture. Set aside and by the time the chicken is ready the onions should be nice and soft.

To make the butter, place the softened butter, marmalade, parsley, Sicilian olives and preserved lemon in a bowl, season with salt and pepper and use a spatula to whip the butter until well combined.

When the chicken is cooked, at about the 50 minute mark, remove it from the oven and place dollops of the flavoured butter on top of the chicken and potatoes. Don't be shy, use it all. Pop it back in the oven for a further 5 to 10 minutes until the butter is entirely melted and bubbling.

To serve the Ras El Hanout Roast Chicken, divide steamed greens between four serving plates. Top with a leg and a thigh for each person and divvy up the potatoes. Make sure to spoon over the butter from the bottom of the pan and top with a pile of the Sumac Onion Pickle. The pickle really helps to cut through the rich, buttery sauce. Scatter over toasted pistachios and parsley leaves and serve.

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