

Sunday Lunch

Sitting down to a long family meal isn't always practical, but Sunday lunch is a wonderful occasion that shouldn't be stressful, and shouldn't be rushed. As with any dinner party, timing is the key here, and the best way to work out timings is simply to decide what time you want to eat – and work backwards! Roasted joints of all descriptions will benefit from 20-30 minutes resting time – which gives plenty of time to finish veg, Yorkshires, gravies etc and frees up oven space to reheat roast potatoes, parsnips etc. Spoil yourself with a great joint of meat from the butchers and then use up any leftovers in the other recipes within this book. Check the Veg section for accompaniments & Yorkshire Puddings (p39).

Roasting Meats

Whatever you are roasting, try not to have the meat in contact with the roasting tin, or it will fry on the bottom. Sit it on a bed of veg; onions &/or carrots are best, peel the onion and slice into ½ inch rounds, peel and halve the carrots. You can add leeks, celery, garlic and herbs if you are making gravy in the pan. You can serve the veg with the meal or use to make superb gravy.

All roast meat improves with resting – ideally for half the time it has been roasting. If you

have an oven with a grill above, the grill area will get nice and warm and makes an excellent place to rest meats or warm plates.

Chicken

Try to choose a chicken that is free range – there will be so much more flavour. To add to that flavour, try mixing some herbs of your choice (thyme, lemon thyme, tarragon, oregano all work well) with some soft butter (around 100g) salt, pepper and a tbsp of olive oil and mix well. Then carefully use your finger to separate the skin from the breast at the open end...try not to split the skin. Insert the butter mix under the skin and massage down the breasts and into the legs. The skin will shrink from the breasts once it has been separated, so cover the top of the breast area with any spare skin from the neck end of the chicken or a couple of rashers of bacon.

Bash a couple of garlic cloves and insert into the cavity along with any residual butter, a few sprigs of your chosen herb and half a lemon if you have one lying around. Place on top of onion rounds and roast in the oven for 20 minutes per 500g plus an additional 20 minutes (1 kg will take 1 hour, 2 kg will take 1hr 40 etc). Check to ensure it is cooked by pushing a leg away from the body and check the meat around the hip bone is cooked