

More than 1 hour

Serves 4-5

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Ingredients

Stuffing:

- Glug olive oil
 - 1 red onion, chopped
 - 4 cloves garlic, chopped
 - 6 sprigs fresh thyme
 - 1 punnet (250g) white button mushrooms, finely chopped
 - ½ ciabatta, finely torn (or use blitzed or grated stale bread)
 - Handful fresh parsley, chopped
 - 1 egg
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- 1 (about 1.2kg) free-range whole chicken, giblets removed
 - 2 red onions, halved
 - 2 bulbs garlic, halved
 - Handful each fresh sage and thyme
 - ¼ cup (60ml) soft butter
 - Salt and milled pepper
 - 1 punnet (200g) exotic mushrooms, finely chopped (optional)

Method

1. Heat oil in a large pan and fry onion, garlic and thyme for 5 minutes or until golden.
2. Add button mushrooms and cook for 5-8 minutes until soft.
3. Add ciabatta and parsley and cook for another 2-3 minutes, remove from heat and cool completely.
4. Add egg to cooled stuffing mixture.
5. Loosen the skin of the chicken by running your finger under the edge of the skin at the

bottom of the breast. (Take care not to tear the skin.)

6. Spread mushroom stuffing underneath the skin to cover the entire breast. (Stuffing the skin of the legs is optional.)
7. Use the leftover stuffing to fill the chicken cavity.
8. Preheat oven to 200°C.
9. Arrange halved onions, garlic bulbs and herbs in a deep roasting pan.
10. Melt half the butter to use for basting and rub the rest over the chicken.
11. Add chicken to roasting pan. Season well.
12. Roast for 60-80 minutes, basting regularly with melted butter. (If using exotic mushrooms, add to the pan 10 minutes before the end of cooking time.)
13. Serve chicken on a platter with roasted onions, garlic and mushrooms, drizzled with pan juices (or make a quick gravy).

COOK'S NOTE

To make a quick gravy, remove chicken from roasting dish and pour all the remaining juices and pan scrapings into a saucepan. Add 1 cup of water and simmer for a few minutes. Thicken with cornflour and add a generous knob of butter. Don't forget to season your gravy with salt, pepper and lemon juice before serving!

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