

BASIL PESTO CHICKEN

Ask The Butcher for a Whole D'Artagnan Roaster or D'Artagnan Chicken Pieces. I have made this both ways and either is simple. When feeding more than three people I suggest using the chicken pieces. I find it super simple to pop the baking trays into the oven with the pieces already cut up...time saver...and simple to serve. My boys just gobble this up!

You will also need:

2 cups of fresh basil leaves
1/4 cup of pine nuts
1/2 cup of Pecorino Romano cheese; grated
2/3 cup of good quality olive oil
3 cloves of garlic; peeled
Freshly ground salt and pepper

This will make enough pesto to top one roasting chicken, or eight chicken breasts. If you would like, The Butcher will cut the chicken breast into halves for more manageable pieces.

Start by heating the oven to 375 degrees fahrenheit.

Season the chicken with freshly ground salt and pepper. Drizzle with a little bit of olive oil.

If you are using a whole roasting chicken you can place it on top of a red onion and several heads of garlic that have been cut in half. This will act as a rack to keep the meat off the bottom of the pan. Pop the chicken into the oven and start roasting it uncovered for about 10-15 minutes while you prepare the pesto.

If you are using the chicken pieces, place them on a parchment lined baking tray and proceed to make the Basil Pesto. Do not place them in the oven until you have topped them with the pesto.

To make the Basil Pesto:

Place the basil leaves, pine nuts and garlic cloves in the food processor. Let them come together for a couple of quick pulses. Now you can add the olive oil through the spout, as you have the processor mixing on a low setting. Once the olive oil is incorporated you can lift the lid and add the grated cheese. Give it a good mix and let the pesto come together. Remove the pesto to a bowl and add four twists each of freshly ground salt and pepper.

If you are using the whole roasting chicken, remove the pan from the oven and top the chicken with the pesto. Place the pan back in the oven and continue to roast, uncovered, for the remaining time. These D'artagnan chickens seem to roast in about 50-60 minutes total. Check the internal temperature of the meat at the 50 minute mark. Remove the chicken from the oven when it reaches 162 degrees, and set it on the counter covered with foil, for ten minutes. This will allow the temperature to rise to 165 degrees and will keep the meat juicy! Carve and Enjoy!

If you are using the chicken pieces, top them with the pesto and place them in the oven for 30-40 minutes rotating the pan at the halfway mark. Use your meat thermometer to check that the meat reaches 165 degrees. The bone-in pieces may take a few minutes longer than the boneless.

Serve with your favorite side dish! Good to Go!