

# Tarragon Chicken

A swift Internet investigation of either Tarragon Chicken or, in French, *Poulet à l'Estragon* reveals that there seems to be no standard way to prepare, or even to describe, such a dish. This idea for a roasted whole chicken version was given to me by a former colleague and it seems to work admirably.

The same friend also told me that a Gewurtztraminer wine makes an ideal accompaniment. Once again, he was absolutely right.

## Planning

serves:	2/4
prep time:	10 mins
cooking time:	1-1¼ hrs

## Ingredients

1 medium roasting Chicken  
1 pack fresh tarragon  
(20-25g)  
125g butter  
30g plain flour  
300ml water  
Salt & pepper

## Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas 6. Put a roasting pan, one that will hold the chicken comfortably, into the oven to heat, also.

Pick the best young leaves from the tips of the tarragon stalks and reserve them to add to the sauce when it's made. Cram the remaining tarragon (whole, no need to chop) along with 100g of the butter into the cavity of the chicken.

When the roasting pan is hot, add the remaining 25g butter so that it melts then put the chicken into the pan. Season the skin of the chicken lightly with salt and pepper and return it to the oven to roast. While the chicken is roasting, chop the reserved tarragon leaves. Cooking time will naturally vary depending on chicken size but 50 minutes to one hour 10 minutes usually does it; check using the tried and trusted thigh-piercing technique and make sure the juices run clear.

Remove the chicken from the oven. The butter will have been well flavoured by the tarragon and most will have flowed from the body cavity into the pan. Tilt the chicken to encourage the remaining juices out, then keep it warm while you make the sauce.

Put the roasting pan with the tarragon-flavoured butter onto a gentle heat and stir in the flour. Cook the butter in the flour for a couple of minutes. Now you are essentially making a white sauce but with water. (I was tempted to use chicken stock once. Don't - it's better with water.) Add the water gradually, stirring between additions to avoid lumps. When all the water is added, increase the heat slightly and bring to simmering point. Simmer for a couple of minutes to cook out any raw flour taste. Season with salt, papper and the reserved, chopped tarragon.

Collect any juices running from the chicken while resting and when you carve it and stir them into the sauce.