



F&W COOKS

Party Tricks

In her new book, *Open Kitchen*, Susan Spungen shares secrets for easy entertaining.

I AIM FOR A CERTAIN SPREZZATURA when cooking for friends. Italian for “studied nonchalance,” it really captures my entertaining philosophy: Food should seem magical when it lands on the table. The kitchen is my happy place; I don’t mind spending time there making a great meal. But nobody wants to be sweating over the stove when guests arrive! I’m all for assembling dishes ahead of time, like Cheesy Baked Pasta with Radicchio (recipe p. 44) or my Root Vegetable Tian (p. 46). For those times when only roast chicken will do, this Rosy Harissa Chicken wins with a delicious pan sauce. These dishes are just a few of my favorite ways to get ahead, so when I gather friends at my table, I can relax with them and have a good time. —SUSAN SPUNGEN

Rosy Harissa Chicken

ACTIVE 30 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 55 MIN, PLUS 8 HR MARINATION; SERVES 4

This head-turning take on roast chicken gets a kick of flavor from harissa, a fiery Moroccan chile paste. You can find Spungen's favorite from New York Shuk online, but any store-bought harissa will deliver delicious results.

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup kefir or plain whole-milk Greek yogurt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh lemon juice
- 3 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. harissa paste (such as New York Shuk), divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
 - 1 Tbsp. fresh thyme leaves plus 4 thyme sprigs, divided
 - 2 tsp. grated garlic
 - 1 Tbsp. black pepper, divided
 - 4 (10-oz.) chicken leg quarters
 - 2 large shallots, halved
 - 1 garlic head, halved crosswise
 - 1 small lemon, halved
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water

- 1 Tbsp. rose-harissa spice blend (such as New York Shuk) or paprika
- 2 Tbsp. dried edible rose petals or rose buds (optional)

1. Whisk together kefir, lemon juice, 3 tablespoons harissa paste, $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons salt, thyme leaves, grated garlic, and 2 teaspoons pepper. Place chicken quarters in a large ziplock plastic bag. Pour kefir mixture over chicken, and seal bag. Refrigerate at least 8 hours or up to 24 hours, turning bag occasionally.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F with oven rack in upper third of oven. Let chicken stand at room temperature 30 minutes. Scatter shallots, garlic, and lemon halves, cut sides down, in a heavy-duty roasting pan or 13- x 9-inch baking dish. Add thyme sprigs. Remove chicken from marinade, allowing excess marinade to drip off. Discard marinade. Sprinkle chicken with remaining 2 teaspoons salt and remaining 1 teaspoon pepper; arrange chicken, skin sides up, in a single layer in roasting pan. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water to pan.
3. Roast chicken in preheated oven until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest

portion registers 140°F, 30 to 35 minutes. Turn broiler to high. Baste chicken with pan juices, and sprinkle chicken with rose-harissa spice blend. Broil, basting chicken with pan juices every 2 to 3 minutes, until thermometer registers 165°F, 8 to 10 minutes.

4. Transfer chicken to a channeled cutting board; let rest 10 minutes. Meanwhile, squeeze 1 roasted lemon half and 6 roasted garlic cloves into pan juices; reserve remaining lemon half for serving and remaining garlic cloves for another use. Mash shallots and garlic with a fork. Pour pan juice mixture through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a bowl, pressing to extract liquid; discard solids. Whisk in remaining 2 teaspoons harissa paste. Pour accumulated juices from cutting board into harissa mixture in bowl, and stir. Pour pan juice mixture onto a serving platter, and top with chicken. If desired, crush rose petals over chicken. Serve immediately with reserved lemon half.

MAKE AHEAD Chicken can be marinated overnight or up to 24 hours ahead.

WINE Peppery, Rhône-style California red: 2013 Terre Rouge L'Autre