

Chicken Provencal

Serves 4

Chicken baked in a paper pouch with garlic and artichoke hearts. In the traditional Provencal stew of chicken with garlic, the chicken is surrounded with unpeeled garlic cloves and very slowly steamed in its juices in a sealed, earthenware casserole. Here, garlic is poached to hasten the cooking, and the chicken is steamed in the pouch. This recipe is not recommended for the microwave.

Ingredients:

- 1 frying chicken-quartered, backbone removed (about 3 lbs.)
- 2 medium heads garlic
- 6 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 jars marinated artichoke hearts-6 oz. each
- salt
- fresh-ground black pepper
- 2 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 loaf French bread or Italian bread

Preparation:

Remove and discard the last two wing joints from the chicken.

Break the garlic into cloves. Put the unpeeled cloves in a small saucepan with water to cover. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer until a knife easily penetrates garlic cloves, about 15 minutes. Drain and set aside.

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet until hot but not smoking. Pat the chicken pieces dry and brown them for 3 to 4 minutes on each side.

Cut and oil 4 parchment or foil pouches. Center one piece of chicken on one side of each pouch, add 1/4 of the garlic cloves and artichoke hearts. Drizzle 1 tablespoon of olive oil over each piece of chicken, sprinkle lightly with salt, pepper, and 1/2 teaspoon of thyme. Mark outside of pouches to identify leg portions. Seal pouches. (Can refrigerate parchment pouches up to 4 hours; foil pouches overnight.)

Cooking & Serving:

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400°F. Put pouches on a baking sheet. Bake breast portions 15 minutes and leg portions 18 minutes (18 and 20 minutes if assembled pouches are refrigerated before cooking). Slice and toast the bread. Transfer pouches to plates and carefully pierce each to permit steam to escape. Serve 4 slices of bread with each portion, spreading softened garlic on bread, if desired.