INDIRECT · MEDIUM

Whole spatchcock chicken on the kamado, even crispy skin

A 1.6 kg chicken butterflied flat, roasted at 180°C indirect over a deflector. Golden crackling skin end to end, juicy meat, ready in an hour: the Sunday roast I actually cook on my Torrevieja terrace.



PREP	COOK	SERVINGS	TEMPERATURE
20 min	60 min	4	180 °C

Ingredients

- **1 ud** whole free-range chicken, 1.5-1.7 kg
- **1 cdita** freshly ground black pepper
- **2 cda** extra-virgin olive oil
- **1 ud** lemon (half to roast, half to serve)
- **1 pizca** flaky sea salt, Maldon-style (to finish)
- **1 cda** coarse kosher salt (not fine)
- **1 cdita** sweet Pimentón de la Vera (smoked paprika)
- **4 dientes** garlic cloves, crushed (skin on)
- **4 ramas** fresh thyme sprigs

Method

1 REMOVE THE BACKBONE

Lay the chicken breast-side down. With sturdy kitchen shears, cut along one side of the backbone, from tail to neck, then down the other side. Lift the whole backbone out (keep it for stock). It is the only technical part of the recipe and takes two minutes.

2 FLATTEN THE BUTTERFLY

Flip the chicken skin-side up and open both halves. Place your palm on the centre of the breast and press down firmly until you hear the breastbone give and the bird lies flat. Genuinely flat: if it stays domed, thigh and breast will cook at different rates again.

3 DRY-SALT AND DRY THE SKIN

Pat the chicken dry on both sides. Season with coarse kosher salt all over: skin, back and crevices. Leave it uncovered on a rack for at least 1 hour at room temperature, better overnight in the fridge. The salt seasons deep and the skin dehydrates: that drying is what makes it crisp when it roasts.

4 SET DEFLECTOR AND STABILISE 180°C

Light the charcoal, set the deflector and the grate on top. Stabilise the kamado at 180°C with the bottom damper half open and the top vent a quarter. Wait until the temperature holds steady for 10 minutes. If you are smoking, add an apple or cherry chunk over the coals now.

5 DRESS AND LOAD SKIN UP

Brush the chicken with olive oil, pepper and paprika. Tuck the crushed garlic, thyme and half lemon underneath. Lay the chicken on the grate skin side up and spread flat. Sink the probe into the thickest part of the breast, avoiding bone. Close the lid and leave it shut.

6 ROAST AT INDIRECT HEAT

Cook without touching the chicken. At 180°C indirect it takes 55 to 65 minutes. Pull when the breast reads 74°C internal and the thigh, at its thickest by the bone, reaches 82°C. If the skin browns too early, close the vents a notch; you never need to flip anything.

7 REST AND CARVE

Move the chicken to a board and let it rest 10 minutes uncovered (covering it softens the skin). Carve by separating thighs and drumsticks, then cut each breast off the sternum and into thick slices. Finish with Maldon flakes, the roasted lemon squeezed over and the fresh half in wedges.

Editor's tips

- Drying the skin matters more than any last-minute trick. Salting it uncovered in the fridge overnight is what separates genuinely crackling skin from a leathery one. If you are pressed for time, at least 1 hour at room temperature and a thorough pat-down with paper before loading.
- Probe in two places, not one. The breast rules at 74°C, but the thigh needs 82°C for the collagen to soften so it is not rubbery by the bone. A two-channel probe (or an instant-read you stick in both spots) makes sure neither place comes up short.
- Don't bin the backbone: with the carcass, leftover garlic and lemon you have a homemade chicken stock in an hour. On the kamado it even picks up a smoky note you won't get from the kitchen hob.

Gear for this recipe

Big Green Egg Large

The Large has grate space to spare for the spatchcocked chicken at 180 °C indirect.

mikamado.es/en/kamados/big-green-egg-large

Orework Spanish Holm Oak Charcoal 15 kg

Holm oak charcoal for a clean, steady hour at 180 °C.

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/orework-encina-espanola-15kg

Onlyfire GCG-8552 Cooking System (2 grates + rack + 2 deflectors) for Large Kamado

mikamado.es/en/accesorios/onlyfire-gcg8552-sistema-coccion

Full recipe at: mikamado.es/en/recetas/pollo-entero-espatchcock-kamado

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