

*the little guide to*

# **GREAT CHICKEN**

**PLUS:**  
essential tips  
to make life  
easier

**Delicious chicken recipes for the whole family**



## WELCOME



**Welcome** to our first chicken recipe book with great recipes to keep your family happy come mealtime. Since Astral Foods began in 2001, we've been 100% committed to our core business – delivering the best chicken products to our customers in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa.

Now we're sharing 18 years' know-how and tips along with a few of our favourite recipes to help you do even more with South Africans' favourite meat.

Here's to good, healthy and nutritious food.

**Tuck in!**

**The Astral Commercial Marketing Team**



## A leading Southern African poultry producer

Astral was founded in April 2001 and

- is a top 100 JSE listed company;
- is represented in four Southern African countries;
- has more than 4 000 shareholders;
- employs in excess of 11 453 full-time and contract workers;
- its operations spans

7 000 hectares agricultural and industrial land;

- has four poultry processing plants;
- processes 5 240 000 broilers per week;
- manufactures 1 410 000 tons of animal feed per year;
- uses 850 000 tons of maize per annum; and
- operates nine feed mills in Southern Africa.

# A CUT ABOVE

Six marvellous meals using chicken pieces.

## Crumbed buttermilk drumsticks

**Serves 4**

8 chicken drumsticks  
2 cups (500 ml) buttermilk  
salt and pepper  
1 cup (250 ml) self-raising flour  
½ tsp (2.5 ml) sweet paprika  
½ tsp (2.5 ml) garlic powder  
vegetable oil, for frying

### Cauliflower cheese

2 tbsp (30 g) butter  
⅓ cup (30 g) flour  
2 cups (500 ml) milk  
100 g Cheddar, grated  
salt and pepper  
1 large, whole cauliflower, lightly steamed

Mixed salad, for serving



**Place** the drumsticks in the buttermilk and season. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

**Mix** the flour, paprika and garlic powder in a shallow bowl and add pepper to taste.

**Remove** the drumsticks from the buttermilk, shake off the excess and roll in the flour mixture, one at a time.

**Deep-fry** in batches in hot oil, turning occasionally, until golden brown and cooked through, about 20-25 minutes. Adjust the heat if needed. Drain on kitchen paper and season.

**Preheat** the oven to 180°C.

**Melt** the butter over a low heat, add the flour and cook for 1-2 minutes while stirring.

**Add** the milk gradually while continuing to stir to make a smooth sauce. Add the cheese and stir until melted and well combined. Season.

**Place** the whole cauliflower on a small roasting tray and cover with the cheese sauce.

**Roast** for 20 minutes or until the sauce starts to bubble and the cauliflower is done.

**Serve** the drumsticks with the cauliflower and salad.



## CHICKEN PIECES



### Harissa-spiced thighs with couscous

#### Serves 4

4 tbsp (60 ml) harissa paste  
olive oil  
salt and pepper  
2 lemons, halved  
8 chicken thighs, skin on

#### Couscous

1 cup (250 ml) couscous

2 large aubergines, roasted  
1 tsp (5 ml) each ground  
cumin and coriander  
½ tsp (2.5 ml) each ground  
cinnamon and ginger  
¼ tsp (1.2 ml) nutmeg  
½ cup (125 ml)  
pomegranate rubies  
a handful of parsley, chopped  
salt and pepper

#### Herbed yoghurt

1 cup (250 ml) plain yoghurt  
a handful of parsley or dill,  
chopped  
1 tsp (5 ml) red wine vinegar

**Preheat** the oven to 200°C.

**Mix** the harissa paste with  
a splash of olive oil. Season.

**Place** the thighs on a baking  
tray, coat with the harissa  
sauce and place the  
lemon halves in the tray.  
Bake for 30-40 minutes  
until cooked through.

**Cook** the couscous  
according to the packet  
instructions. Fluff with a  
fork, add a little olive oil  
and season to taste.

**Cube** the aubergine,  
add all the spices and  
drizzle with olive oil.

**Toss** the couscous,  
aubergine, pomegranate  
rubies and herbs in a bowl  
and season well.

**Mix** all the ingredients  
for the herbed yoghurt.

**Serve** the chicken on a  
bed of couscous with the  
yoghurt on the side.

## Chicken and chorizo paella

**Serves 4**

olive oil  
 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
 1 onion, diced  
 1 carrot, peeled and diced  
 100 g chorizo, sliced  
 4 pieces each chicken thighs and drumsticks  
 1 tsp (5 ml) sweet smoked paprika  
 1 red pepper, diced  
 1 chicken stock cube  
 1 tbsp (15 ml) tomato purée  
 1 cup (250 ml) risotto rice  
 2 cups (500 ml) water  
 salt  
 1 tsp (5 ml) ground black pepper  
 $\frac{2}{3}$  cup (180 ml) frozen peas  
 a handful of flat-leaf parsley, chopped, for serving  
 lemon wedges, for serving

**Heat** a splash of oil over a medium heat in a paella pan.

**Add** the garlic, onion, carrot, chorizo, chicken pieces and

paprika. Fry for 5 minutes.

**Add** the red pepper and fry for 5 minutes more.

**Stir** through the stock cube (crumbled), tomato purée and rice. Cook for 5 minutes to allow the rice to absorb the oil.

**Add** water and season, cover and simmer for

15 minutes. Shake the pan occasionally to prevent the paella from sticking. Add a little extra water, if needed. **Stir** in the peas, cover and cook for 5 minutes more.

**Taste** and season, if necessary, and scatter with parsley.

**Serve** with lemon wedges.





## Tangy Asian-inspired wings

### Serves 4

1 kg chicken wings

### Coating

1 cup (250 ml) flour

2 tbsp (30 ml) cornflour

2 tsp (10 ml) salt

1 tsp (5 ml) garlic powder

a big pinch each cayenne pepper and black pepper

### Sauce

2 garlic cloves, crushed

4 cm ginger, grated

2 small handfuls of

coriander, finely chopped

½ cup (125 ml) honey

2 tbsp (30 ml) each lemon

juice and light soya sauce

2 tsp (10 ml) each sesame

oil and chilli flakes

2 tsp (10 ml) cornflour,

mixed with a little water

**Preheat** the oven to 220°C.

**Mix** all the ingredients for the coating.

**Coat** the wings, arrange on a lined baking sheet, spray with cooking spray and roast for 25-30 minutes.

**Combine** all the sauce ingredients except the cornflour in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, remove from the heat, stir in the cornflour, return to the heat and continue stirring to make a sticky sauce.

**Drizzle** the sauce over the wings and serve.



## Saffron masala chicken pieces

### Serves 4

4 pieces each chicken wings, thighs and drumsticks

### Coating

2 tsp (10 ml) dried garlic flakes  
35 g almond flakes  
1 cup (250 ml) panko breadcrumbs  
4 tsp (20 ml) garam masala powder  
2 tsp (10 ml) salt  
1 tsp (5 ml) dried oreganum  
a generous pinch of saffron  
olive oil

### Pilaf

1 cup (250 ml) quinoa  
2 cups (500 ml) chicken stock  
1 red onion, diced  
1 each green, red and yellow pepper, diced  
a handful of microgreens

1 packet tenderstem broccoli, steamed

**Preheat** the oven to 180°C.

**Roughly crush** the garlic and almond flakes, and combine with the breadcrumbs, masala powder, salt and oreganum.

**Mix** the saffron with a little olive oil and brush the chicken pieces with it.

**Press** the top of each

chicken piece into the crumb mixture and arrange in a casserole dish.

**Bake** for 30 minutes, remove the wings and bake for 10 minutes more.

**Cook** the quinoa in the

stock until soft.

**Sauté** the onion and peppers until soft. Stir through the quinoa and scatter with microgreens.

**Serve** the chicken on a bed of quinoa with the broccoli.



## Peri-peri chicken



### Peri-peri chicken drumsticks

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

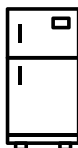
Deseed and finely chop 3-6 **red chillies** and place in a saucepan. Add  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup (80 ml) **olive oil**,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) **white wine vinegar**, 4 **garlic** cloves (crushed), 2 tbsp (30 ml) **tomato purée**, 1 cup (250 ml) **water** and 8-10 **drumsticks**.

Simmer to reduce the liquid to make a basting sauce. Arrange the drumsticks on a baking sheet, baste with the sauce and bake until the skin is crisp, about 15-20 minutes. Drizzle with the remaining sauce and serve with French fries. **Serves 4**

### When buying chicken

Always look for chicken that has an even colour with no blemishes or bruises. The meat should look moist and plump and have a neutral smell. Check that the packaging hasn't been damaged in any way. When buying frozen chicken, make sure that the meat is frozen solid and does not have any soft areas where it has begun to defrost – and do remember to check the sell-by-date too.

## STORING CHICKEN



Always refrigerate or freeze chicken as soon as possible after buying it. If the packet is damaged or soggy and you are going to cook it within two days,

remove the chicken, pat it dry with kitchen paper and place on a plate. Cover with clingwrap or foil and put the plate on the bottom rack of the fridge. That way,



### KEEPING IT CLEAN

- Once chicken has been defrosted, do not refreeze it.
- Don't let raw chicken come into contact with other food, cooked or uncooked.
- Always wash your hands, utensils and surfaces that have been in contact with raw chicken with hot, soapy water.
- Keep a separate chopping board for raw meat to prevent cross-contamination.
- Always make sure that meat is cooked through to kill all harmful bacteria that may have been lurking in it.

it won't contaminate other food if it drips. If you want to freeze the chicken at home, remove it from the packet, pat it dry and reseal in an airtight bag.



# CHOP-CHOP CHICKEN

Our fast and furiously delicious recipes will impress the whole family.



4 chicken breast fillets

12 small tortilla wraps

1 lime, halved, for serving

1-2 avocados, sliced,  
for serving

2 large handfuls of coriander  
leaves, for serving

**Mix** all the ingredients for the marinade, pour over the breasts and marinate for 10-15 minutes.

**Remove** the chicken from marinade and reserve some as basting.

**Brown** the breasts for 1-2 minutes a side in a frying pan, basting them as you go, cover and cook over a low heat for 5 minutes or until cooked through. Remove from the heat, let the meat rest and slice.

**Serve** with the wraps, lime, avocado and coriander.

## Honey and chipotle chicken bites

**Serves 4**

### Marinade

3 tbsp (45 ml) olive oil  
(plus extra for frying)  
½ cup (125 ml) lime juice  
zest of 1 lime  
¼ cup (60 ml) honey

2 tsp (10 ml) chipotle chilli powder  
2 tsp (10 ml) garlic powder  
½ tsp (2,5 ml) ground cumin  
¼ cup (60 ml) fresh coriander, chopped  
salt and pepper

## QUICK CHICKEN

### Coconut and five-spice chicken breasts

#### Serves 4

#### Marinade

1/3 cup (80 ml) coconut milk  
2 tbsp (30 ml) each honey  
and soya sauce

juice of 1 lime  
1 clove garlic,  
finely chopped  
1 tsp (5 ml) Chinese  
five-spice powder  
1 tsp (5 ml) salt

8 chicken breast fillets

#### Thai slaw

4 large carrots, coarsely  
grated  
1 red pepper, deseeded  
and cut into thin strips  
1 small red onion, finely  
sliced

1 cup (250 ml) vegetable oil  
100 g rice noodles

#### Dressing

1/4 cup (60 ml) coconut milk  
juice of 1 lime  
1 red chilli, finely chopped

**Mix** all the ingredients for the marinade, pour over the chicken to cover it completely and marinate for a few minutes.

**Heat** a griddle pan over a high heat.

**Remove** the chicken from the marinade and chargrill on both sides until cooked through.

**Toss** the raw carrots, pepper and onion in a bowl.

**Heat** the oil in a saucepan, fry the noodles until puffy and drain on kitchen paper.

**Whisk** all the ingredients for the dressing together, pour over the slaw and toss.

**Serve** the chicken breasts on a bed of slaw with crunchy noodles.





## Chicken pita pockets

### Serves 4

8 County Fair chicken burgers

### Tzatziki

½ cup (125 ml) Greek

yoghurt

¼ cucumber, grated and  
drained

a large handful of mint  
squeeze of lemon

salt and pepper, to taste

4 large pita breads

2 large handfuls of rocket

125 g cherry tomatoes,  
quartered

1 small packet (about ¼ cup)  
pickled red onion

**Cook** the burgers according  
to the packet instructions.

**Mix** all the ingredients for  
the tzatziki.

**Toast** the pita breads on  
both sides in a hot griddle  
pan and cut in half to  
make pockets.

**Fill** each pocket with a  
chicken burger, rocket and  
cherry tomatoes.

**Serve** with tzatziki and  
pickled onion on the side.



## QUICK CHICKEN



### Grilled chicken with blueberry-mustard sauce

#### Serves 4

½ cup (125 ml) apricot jam  
½ cup (125 ml) white wine vinegar  
2 tbsp (30 ml) English mustard  
salt and pepper  
4 chicken breast fillets  
pinch of cayenne pepper  
¼ punnet (25 g) blueberries

**Mix** the jam, vinegar and mustard, and season. Keep aside ½ a cup.

**Using** a sharp knife, score the breasts (cut crisscross hatches into the top), place in a shallow dish and baste with the jam sauce.

**Fry** the breasts on both sides over a medium heat, basting frequently, until nearly done.

**Add** the blueberries and the reserved sauce, and bring to a boil.

**Cook** for 5 minutes.

**Serve** the chicken with your choice of side dishes and the remaining blueberry sauce on the side.

#### How to keep chicken breasts juicy

To prevent chicken breasts from overcooking and drying out, first sear or brown them. Then remove the breasts from the pan, cook the other ingredients and return the breasts for a few minutes right at the end. This way they will cook through without becoming dry, tough and overcooked. You can do this with stews as well as stir-fries.

### 3 CHEFS' TIPS

A little know-how can make life in the kitchen a lot easier.

#### 1 Done yet?

There are two ways of checking whether a chicken breast is done. The first is to insert the tip of a small knife into the thickest part of the meat. If the juices run clear, it's cooked; if it is still pinkish, it needs to cook for longer. Alternatively, make a small incision in the thickest part of the breast. If the meat is white all the way through and you don't see any pink meat, the breast is done. The juices will be clear too. This method also works for testing whole chickens and other chicken pieces.

#### 2 Slicing chicken breasts for stir-fry

Place the chicken breast, smooth-side down on a cutting board. Cut it diagonally into 1 cm strips and halve each strip lengthwise into longer, thinner strips before cutting them diagonally across the fibres to keep it tender.



### Crumbed chicken breasts with sticky soy dressing

Cook 8 County Fair **crumbed breast steaks** according to the packet instructions. Set aside. Cook 3 cups (750 ml) **sushi rice** according to the packet instructions. Heat 2 tbsp (30 ml) **sesame oil**, 4 crushed **garlic** cloves, ½ cup (120 ml) each

**soya sauce** and **honey** and 2 tbsp (30 ml) **lemon juice** in a small saucepan and simmer to reduce and thicken. Dish up the rice, place a breast steak on top and drizzle with sauce. Serve with pickled ginger and toasted sesame seeds. **Serves 4**

#### 3 Butterflying chicken breasts for schnitzels

Place the chicken breast smooth-side down on a cutting board. Make a shallow incision along one side and keep going as if you were trying to cut the breast into

two identical halves. Stop just before you're cut it all the way through, so that the top and bottom half open up like a book. With a meat mallet, gently hit the thicker part until it is thinner and of an even thickness. Butterflied breasts can also be stuffed with any filling you like.

# HOST WITH A ROAST

Nothing says special quite like the aroma of roast chicken and we have a recipe for every occasion.

## Tandoori roast chicken with cauliflower salad

Serves 4

### Marinade

1 cup (250 ml) plain yoghurt  
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
4 cm ginger, finely grated  
juice of 1 lime  
2½ tbsp (37 ml) tomato paste  
a handful of coriander leaves, chopped  
2 tbsp (30 ml) each tandoori paste and chilli flakes or powder  
1 tbsp (15 ml) ground cumin  
½ tsp (2.5 ml) turmeric  
2 tsp (10 ml) salt and pepper

1 whole chicken

### Cauliflower salad

¼ tsp (1.2 ml) each dried turmeric, cinnamon, cumin and coriander  
olive oil  
1 cauliflower, broken into florets  
2 large handfuls of coriander leaves  
100 g honey cashew nuts  
50 g pomegranate rubies  
  
2 cups (500 ml) basmati rice



**Mix** all the ingredients for the marinade, add the chicken and coat. Refrigerate for 1 hour or overnight.

**Preheat** the oven to 190°C.

**Remove** the chicken from the marinade, place on a roasting tray, cover and roast for 1 hour. Uncover and roast 15-20 minutes more.

**Mix** the dried spices with a little oil, season, toss the cauliflower in it and roast for 15 minutes. Leave to cool.

**Add** the coriander, cashews and pomegranate rubies.

**Cook** the rice according to the packet instructions.

**Serve** the chicken with the rice and cauliflower salad.



## Christmas chicken with cranberries

Serves 4

### Marinade

⅓ cup (80ml) dried cranberries  
 2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil  
 2 tbsp (30 ml) maple syrup  
 ¼ cup (60 ml) balsamic vinegar  
 salt and black pepper  
 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

1 whole chicken  
 a small handful of fresh thyme leaves  
 ½ cup (125 ml) fresh cranberries  
 2 tbsp (30 ml) each maple syrup and melted butter  
 10-12 baby onions, peeled  
 olive oil  
 salt and pepper

**Preheat** the oven to 190°C.

**Blitz** the ingredients for the marinade in a blender until smooth. Season to taste.

**Place** the chicken on a roasting tray, pour over the marinade and cover.

**Marinate** for 30 minutes in the refrigerator.

**Roast** the chicken, covered, in the marinade for 1 hour. Uncover and scatter with cranberries and thyme.

**Brush** with maple syrup and butter, and roast for

20 minutes more.

**Place** the onions on a roasting tray, drizzle with oil, season and roast for 20-30 minutes.

**Arrange** the chicken and onions on a platter.

**Serve** with green beans and creamy potato gratin.



## WHOLE BIRDS



### Fragrant couscous-stuffed chicken

#### Serves 4

½ cup (80 g) couscous  
zest and juice of 1 orange  
zest and juice of 1 lemon  
(reserve 1 lemon half)  
½ cup (125 ml) mixed dried  
fruit, chopped  
½ packet (50 g) unsalted  
mixed nuts, chopped

a large handful each of  
fresh mint and parsley,  
roughly chopped (plus  
extra for serving)  
olive oil  
1 tsp (5 ml) fennel seeds  
1 tsp (5 ml) coriander seeds  
½ tsp (2,5 ml) ground  
cinnamon  
½ tsp (2,5 ml) cumin seeds

2 cardamom pods, crushed  
salt and pepper  
1 whole chicken

**Preheat** the oven to 190°C.

**Place** the couscous, orange and lemon zest and juice, dried fruit, nuts, mint and parsley in a bowl.

**Add** a splash of olive oil and ½ cup of warm water, and mix well.

**Grind** all the whole spices and a pinch of salt with a pestle and mortar. Add to the couscous together with the dried spices.

**Stuff** the chicken cavity with the couscous stuffing. Close with the lemon half.

**Cover** and roast for 1 hour, then uncover and roast for 15-20 minutes more.

**Sprinkle** with mint and parsley and serve.

#### How to stop the breast from drying out when making roast chicken

Roast the chicken breast-side down for two thirds of the cooking time. This way, all the juices will run down into the breast meat and keep it moist. Once you are ready to crisp the skin, carefully turn the chicken breast-side up and roast until golden.



## HOW-TOS AND HACKS

### Joint a chicken

Place the chicken breast-side up on a cutting board. Pull the leg and thigh away from the body and use your fingers to find the hip joint in the fold. Stick the tip of a large knife into the joint and cut through the skin, meat and joint to separate the thigh and leg from the body. Repeat on the other side. Use the same method to separate the leg from the thigh and to cut the wings from the body. To remove the chicken breast, cut through the breast bone to divide the carcass into two. Cut away all bone and gristle from the breasts. You will now have two of each – thighs, drumsticks, wings and breasts. Add the carcass to soups, stews or casseroles to flavour them and remove the bones just before dishing up.

## Roast chicken with creamy lemon sauce

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Place **6 chicken pieces**, skin on, in a casserole dish. Brush with ¼ cup (60 ml) melted **butter** and **season**. Arrange 600 g **baby potatoes** and a few sprigs of **thyme** in the dish. Drizzle with **olive oil** and roast for 45 minutes. Heat ½ cup (125 ml) **white wine** in a saucepan and reduce to 2 tbsp. Turn down the heat to low and whisk in ½ cup (125 ml) **butter**, a few pieces at a time, until the sauce is smooth and all the butter has been incorporated. Whisk in 1 cup (250 ml) **cream** and the juice of 1 **lemon**. Keep warm and serve on the side with the chicken and potatoes.

**Serves 4**



### How to defrost a whole chicken

Thawing a frozen chicken is best done overnight in the fridge. Place it in a large bowl or on a plate to prevent the juices from dripping in the fridge. Before cooking it, check inside the cavity to see that there is no more ice. If pressed for time, put the bird in a bucket of cold water in the sink, but be sure to keep the water cold to prevent bacteria from growing.



### Getting a golden skin

Check that the skin is completely dry, rub the whole bird generously with oil and season well. Uncover the chicken 20-30 minutes before the end of the cooking time and place it on a shallow baking tray or on an oven rack on a tray to allow the dry heat to come into contact with as much skin as possible. Roast until the skin is crisp and glassy.



# RECIPES TO FEED A FLOCK

Impress guests with this host of great cocktail snacks.

## Bacon and chipotle wings with maple-bourbon glaze

**Serves 6**  
**(or 2 as a main)**

12 chicken wings  
salt and pepper  
12 slices of bacon (cut in half lengthwise)

### Glaze

1 garlic clove, finely chopped  
¼ cup (60 ml) bourbon whiskey  
¼ cup (60 ml) maple syrup  
3 tbsp (45 ml) freshly squeezed orange juice  
½ tbsp (7,5 ml) smoked paprika

**Remove** the wing tips and cut the wings into drumlets and winglets.

**Preheat** the oven to 180°C.

**Season** the wing pieces and wrap a strip of bacon around each.

**Combine** all the ingredients for the glaze and mix well.

**Roast** the wing pieces, basting them every 10 minutes, until golden and cooked through, for about 40 minutes.

**Serve** with French fries and tomato sauce..





## Chicken nugget bao buns

**Serves 6 (or 2 as a main)**

18 Country Fair chicken nuggets

### Spicy mayonnaise

$\frac{2}{3}$  cup (180 ml) mayonnaise  
3 tbsp (45 ml) sriracha sauce

### Pickled cucumber

$\frac{1}{2}$  large cucumber  
 $1\frac{1}{2}$  cup (375 ml) water  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup (80 ml) sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup (125 ml) apple cider  
or white vinegar  
 $1\frac{1}{2}$  tsp (7,5 ml) salt

18 frozen bao buns, defrosted  
and reheated  
a large handful of coriander  
leaves  
10 radishes, sliced

**Cook** the chicken nuggets  
according to the instructions  
on the packet.

**Mix** the mayonnaise and  
sriracha sauce in a bowl.

**Shave** the cucumber into  
ribbons with a potato peeler.

**Mix** the water, sugar, cider  
or vinegar and salt in a bowl.  
Submerge the cucumber  
and refrigerate.

**Slice** the buns in half  
and sandwich them with  
mayonnaise, a chicken nugget,  
coriander and radish slices.

**Skewer** a cucumber ribbon  
with a cocktail stick and use it  
to secure the bun. Serve warm.



## Southern-fried wings with blue-cheese dip

**Serves 6 (or 2 as a main)**

1 kg chicken wings  
canola oil, for frying

### Coating

2 cups (500 ml) flour  
½ tsp (2.5 ml) cayenne  
pepper

2 tsp (10 ml) salt  
1 tbsp (15 ml) ground ginger  
1 tbsp (15 ml) onion powder  
1 tsp (5 ml) garlic powder  
1 tsp (5 ml) dry thyme

### Blue-cheese dip

2 tbsp (30 g) butter  
1 tbsp (15 ml) flour

⅔ cup (150 ml) milk  
50g blue cheese

honey, for serving

**Cut** the wings into drumlets and winglets, and discard the tips.

**Heat** 4cm canola oil in a large saucepan and heat to 170°C.

**Combine** all the ingredients for the coating.

**Coat** wing pieces with the flour mixture, pressing it firmly into the skin.

**Fry** in batches in the hot oil for 8-10 minutes, a little longer for larger pieces, until golden brown and cooked through.

**Drain** on kitchen paper.

**Melt** the butter in a saucepan, add the flour and whisk in the milk. Cook until thickened.

**Stir** in the blue cheese until melted.

**Drizzle** the wings with honey and serve the blue cheese sauce on the side as a dip.



## Chicken nugget and halloumi skewers

**Serves 6**

20 County Fair chicken nuggets

### Chutney

olive oil

½ red onion, finely chopped

200 g cherry tomatoes, chopped

3 tbsp (45 ml) sweet chilli sauce

2 tbsp (30 ml) red wine vinegar

1 tsp (5 ml) chilli flakes

salt and pepper

1 block of halloumi cheese

juice of ½ lemon

cocktail sticks, for serving

20 basil leaves, for serving

**Cook** the nuggets according to the packet instructions.

**Fry** the onion until soft. Add the tomato, sweet chilli sauce, red wine vinegar and chilli flakes. Season to taste.

**Simmer** for 5 minutes to thicken.

**Cut** the halloumi into bite-sized cubes (slightly smaller than the nuggets).

**Fry** in a hot non-stick pan until crispy. Drizzle with lemon juice.

**Spear** a nugget and piece

of halloumi with each cocktail stick and add

a dollop of chutney and a basil leaf. Serve warm.



## Tempura chicken bites



Heat 4 cm **vegetable oil** in a shallow saucepan. Quickly whisk together  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (180 ml) **cornflour**,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60ml) **flour**, 1 tsp (5 ml) **baking powder**,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp (2,5ml) **salt**,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (125 ml) **ice-cold water** and 1 **beaten egg** to make a thin batter. Slice 500 g **chicken breast fillets** into 2 x 2 cm pieces and dust with **flour**. Dip the chicken in the batter and deep-fry in batches until golden and cooked through (about 2-3 minutes). Serve with a sweet-and-sour dipping sauce. (See recipe on the right). **Serves 4-6**



### OH, CRUMBS!

The best way to cook crumbed chicken.

**1** Always follow the cooking guidelines on the packet when using store-bought crumbed chicken.

**2** Make sure that the oil is hot enough. Between 170°C and 180°C is best.

**3** Cook the chicken long enough. If not, the crumbs can be soggy and the meat undercooked.

**4** Drain the cooked chicken on kitchen paper to absorb excess oil.

## 3 DIPS FOR CHICKEN NUGGETS

### 1 Garlic and lemon mayo

Stir 2 finely chopped garlic cloves and the zest and juice of  $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon into 1 cup (250 ml) mayonnaise.

### 2 Tomato relish

Finely chop 3 small gherkins and 3 pickled onions and stir into  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (180 ml) tomato sauce.

### 3 Sweet and sour

Stir together  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (180 ml) pineapple juice,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) apple cider vinegar,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) brown sugar, 2 tbsp (30 ml) tomato sauce and 1 tbsp (15 ml) cornflour. Thicken over a low heat and allow to cool.

## Chicken and food poisoning

Raw chicken may contain natural bacteria, which could be dangerous if it hasn't been stored properly. Salmonella and campylobacter, which are linked to food poisoning and gastro, are among the most common. So be sure to read our safety guidelines on page 2.

## ASTRAL FOODS FAQ

**Do your chickens grow faster because they are injected with growth hormones?** Absolutely not!

None of our chickens are given growth hormones. Their growth rate is thanks to a well-balanced, researched diet, good genetics and excellent farming practices.

**Are your chicken meat injected with water before being sold?** We never freeze

our fresh chicken and don't add water to our meat at any stage. In fact, the meat loses water during our air-chilling process. Our Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) pieces are treated with brine, which helps to make them more tender and juicy.

**Are your chickens kept in small cages?** No. Our chickens are kept in large, disinfected sheds where they roam freely and can scratch in the thick layer of straw, wood

shavings and sunflower husks that cover the floors. They also have unrestricted access to light, water and fresh food.

**Do your chickens only eat maize?** Maize makes up no more than 50% of their feed. The other 50% consists of specially formulated proteins, vitamins and minerals in the form of pellets and crumbles that are easily digested.

**Do the antibiotics given to chicken remain in the meat, and could it affect me?** Antibiotics are only administered when needed. It's always done by a registered vet and never within five days of slaughter to ensure that the meat contains no residue. Independent labs routinely test our products to verify that they are free of all traces of antibiotics and safe for our customers to enjoy.

### CONTACT DETAILS

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☎ 021 505 8000 (CT)

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# WINNER, WINNER CHICKEN DINNER!

Cut out and keep this handy guide to the best way to cook chicken.



## COOKING GUIDE

**WHOLE** R, B, S, C

**HEADS** S, C

**BREASTS**

Bone-in, skin on

R, G, B, F, S, C

Deboned, skinless

G, B, F

**THIGHS** R, G, B, F, S, C

**DRUMSTICKS**

R, G, B, F, S, C

**WINGS** R, G, B, F

**WINGLETS** R, G, B, F

**FEET** R, G, B, F, S, C

### KEY

R - roast

G - grill

B - braai

F - fry

S - stew

C - casserole

**HEADS** The head is the talkie part of South Africa's famous walkie-talkies and stewing and braising are the best ways to cook it.

**BREASTS** This very lean cut is best cooked quickly to keep them moist, for instance grilling, frying and braaiing. When stewing or braising breasts, don't overcook them as they will become dry and stringy.

**WINGS** Wings are high in fat and can withstand heat without becoming dry. They therefore are suited to deep-frying, braaiing and roasting. But however you cook them,

wings are a winner, thanks to their high skin to meat ratio, which makes them finger-licking delicious.

**TAILS** The tail is often attached to the thigh. It is packed with flavour because it contains a lot of fat and, thanks to the large skin area, becomes very crispy.

**NECKS** This bony cut has very little meat but is an inexpensive way to flavour sauces and stock.

**THIGHS** Like drumsticks, thighs will be rather tough if not cooked properly. They have loads of fantastic

flavour and are best when roasted or braised slowly or added to stews.

**DRUMSTICKS** This popular cut could also be tough if it hasn't been cooked for long enough. The delicious dark brown meat particularly takes time and drumsticks taste best when they've been roasted, stewed, braised or braaiied.

**FEET** The other half of walkie-talkies, chicken feet are bony and low on meat. Once cooked, though, they are tender and can be eaten whole. Braai or grill them if you like crisp, crunchy skin.

