

Chicken Traybake with Bitter Orange (or Lemon) and Fennel



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Recipe source: Nigella Lawson, featured in SIMPLY NIGELLA

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large bulbs fennel (approx. 2 pounds give or take)
- 3 ounces extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling on the chicken when cooking
- 2 Seville oranges (zested and juiced, or zest and juice of 1 eating orange and juice of 1 lemon, about scant half cup of juice)
- *NOTE: Feel free to substitute citrus here. I used Meyer lemons, and I think regular thin-skinned lemons and/or oranges would be just fine in this recipe.*
- 2 teaspoons sea salt flakes
- 4 teaspoons fennel seeds
- 4 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 12 chicken thighs with skin and bone still on (preferably organic)

DIRECTIONS:

- Remove the fronds from the fennel and save them in the fridge for serving. Cut the bulbs of fennel into quarters and then cut each quarter, lengthways, into 3. Set aside.
- Place a large freezer bag inside a wide-necked measuring jug or something similar; pour in the oil, add the citrus zest and juice (and lemon juice, if using), and spoon in the salt, fennel seeds and mustard. Stir briefly to mix.

- Add a quarter of the chicken pieces, followed by a quarter of the fennel pieces, and so on until all chicken parts and vegetables have been added.
- Seal the bag tightly at the top, then lay the bag flat in a baking dish or on a plate so that the marinade covers as much chicken as possible. Marinate in the fridge overnight or up to 1 day.
- When ready to cook, pour the contents of the bag – marinade and all – into a large shallow roasting pan or sheet pan. Arrange the chicken pieces so that they are sitting, skin-side up, on top of the fennel. Leave it for 30 minutes or so, to come up to room temperature while you preheat the oven to 400°F.
- Drizzle 1 tablespoon canola oil onto the chicken, and cook in the oven for 1 hour, by which time the fennel will be soft and the chicken cooked through and bronzed on top.
- Note: Start checking for doneness about 15 minutes earlier; use a meat thermometer.
- Put the chicken and fennel onto a warmed serving plate.
- Make a pan sauce: Put the pan over a medium heat or pour the juices into a saucepan. Boil the juices, stirring as you watch it turn syrupy; this should take about 2 – 5 minutes.
- Or make a separate pan sauce with equal parts orange juice and chicken broth/stock. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and cook until it thickens a bit, approx. 5 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon of butter, stir to melt.
- Pour the reduced sauce over the chicken and fennel, and then tear over the reserved fennel fronds.