

GARLIC & THYME ROASTED CHICKEN WITH MUSTARD CROUTONS

R·STUART & C^o

Pinot Mom



SERVES 4 · Wine Pairing Suggestions:
Big Fire Pinot Noir, Big Fire Tempranillo,
Vignette Pinot Noir

1 loaf country bread,
ciabatta or other
sturdy loaf,
preferably stale,
sliced ½ inch thick

Dijon mustard to taste
Extra-virgin olive oil

1½ t kosher salt,
plus more to taste

Freshly ground
black pepper

8 bone-in chicken pieces,
with skin (*I used thighs,
as they're my favorites*)

1 head garlic,
separated into cloves,
no need to peel

1 bay leaf, torn into pieces

½ bunch thyme sprigs

You don't have to know me very long to know that I love chicken – particularly roasted. In fact, I make a roasted chicken almost every Sunday night. I have a method I've developed over the years which produces the loveliest, juiciest roasted chicken ever. I sometimes play with other people's roast chicken recipes, just to see if I can gild the lily. Hence this adaptation of Melissa Clark's recipe - the mustard croutons were a big hit with my family and this might just make it into the regular rotation.

1. Preheat the oven to 425°. Lay the bread slices in the bottom of a heavy-duty roasting pan, just large enough to hold the chicken pieces in one layer. Brush the bread with mustard (*I use quite a bit*), drizzle liberally with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Season the chicken all over with salt and pepper and place the pieces on the bread. If you're using white and dark meat, arrange the white meat in the center and the dark meat toward the outside of the pan.
2. Toss the garlic cloves in a bit of olive oil to coat. Scatter the bay leaf and thyme over the chicken, tuck the garlic cloves in between the chicken pieces, and drizzle everything with a bit more olive oil. (*The parts of the croutons that are not underneath pieces of chicken will burn, so it is best to try to cover them almost completely*).
3. Roast the chicken until it's lightly browned and the thigh juices run clear when pricked with a knife, about 50 minutes.
4. Let the chicken rest, covered with foil to keep warm. Serve with pieces of the mustard croutons and the roasted garlic cloves.

