

Tandoori Chicken

Serves 4–6

I love this recipe. It's great cooked on the barbecue, or on a grill pan, or in a really hot oven (as hot as it will go), or of course the traditional way — in a tandoor oven. It really is best if it has 24 hours to marinate, but even 2 or 3 hours will be good. I love having some of the leftovers in a sandwich in pitta bread with Tomato Raita (page 187).

1 chicken, about 1.5–2.25 kg (3¼–5 lb), jointed and skinned (see Chicken Baked with Mushrooms and Marjoram, page 103), or about 6 large chicken breasts, or legs, or both!

75 g (3 oz) roughly chopped onion (about 1/2 an onion)

2 cloves of peeled garlic

1–2 red chillies, roughly sliced (I like to leave the seeds in for a bit of heat!)

2.5 cm (1 in) piece of ginger, chopped

1 tsp salt

250 ml (8¾ fl oz) natural yoghurt

3 tbsp lemon juice

2 tsp Garam Masala (I buy this in my local health-food shop, or see page 183)

to serve:

6 wedges of lime or lemon and Tomato Raita (page 187)

In a food processor, or liquidiser, whiz up the onion, garlic, chillies, ginger and the salt, then add the yoghurt, lemon juice and garam masala and whiz to a fine purée. Cut deep slits into the meat about 4 cm (1½ in) long — this will allow the marinade to penetrate further into the meat. Toss the chicken pieces into the marinade, rubbing it into the meat with your hands. Cover and place in the fridge to marinate, for at least 2 hours, better overnight.

When you are ready to cook it, remove the chicken pieces from the marinade, but don't wipe it all off, just whatever is clinging to the meat. Place the chicken on a hot barbecue to cook on both sides until completely cooked — about 10–15 minutes on either side, depending on the heat of the barbecue. Or place the pieces on a roasting tray in