

Peruvian Roast Chicken with Green Aji Sauce (Pollo a la Brasa)

⌚ Prep: 25m 🔥 Cook: 50m 🌬 Rest: 8h ⚡ Total: 555m 🍽 4 servings



Video ref: J. Kenji López-Alt

COOKING SEQUENCE & CHECKPOINTS

- 1

Spatchcock & Mix Spice Paste

⌚ 5 min

Cut out the backbone using poultry shears, flip the chicken, and press the breastbone firmly to flatten. Mash 6 cloves garlic, aji panca, soy sauce, 2 tbsp lime juice, vegetable oil, cumin, paprika, oregano, kosher salt, and black pepper into a spice paste.
✓ Checkpoint: Flat chicken and fragrant mahogany spice paste.
- 2

Peruvian Marinade

⌚ 8h (480m)

Rub the spice paste and dark beer all over and under the chicken skin. Marinate in the refrigerator for 8 to 24 hours.
✓ Checkpoint: Deeply seasoned red-brown bird.
- 3

High-Heat Roast

⌚ 50 min

Roast on a wire rack at 425°F (220°C) for 45 to 50 minutes until skin crackles and the thickest part of the breast reaches ≥165°F (74°C).
✓ Checkpoint: Crispy dark bronze skin.
- 4

Blend Aji Verde Sauce

⌚ 5 min

Blend aji amarillo paste, seeded jalapeños, 2 cloves garlic, fresh cilantro, mayonnaise, sour cream / queso fresco, and 1 tbsp lime juice until thick and creamy.
✓ Checkpoint: Electric green velvety dipping sauce.

MISE EN PLACE / INGREDIENTS [17]

- ☐ 1 whole Whole roasting chicken (4 to 5 lbs), spatchcocked

☐ 8 cloves Fresh garlic cloves (6 minced for chicken paste + 2 for Aji Verde sauce)

☐ 3 tbsp Freshly squeezed lime juice (for marinade and Aji Verde sauce)

☐ 1 tbsp Ground cumin

☐ 1 tsp Dried oregano

☐ 1 tsp Freshly ground black pepper

☐ 2 tbsp Peruvian aji amarillo yellow pepper paste (Inca's Food)

☐ 1 cup Fresh cilantro leaves and tender stems

☐ 0.5 cup Sour cream and crumbled queso fresco or cotija cheese (for Aji Verde sauce)
- ☐ 2 tbsp Peruvian aji panca paste (Inca's Food)

☐ 2 tbsp Dark soy sauce

☐ 2 tbsp Neutral vegetable oil

☐ 1 tbsp Sweet paprika

☐ 1.5 tsp Kosher salt

☐ 0.5 cup Dark beer or malt beverage

☐ 2 whole Jalapeño peppers, seeded

☐ 0.5 cup Real mayonnaise (for Aji Verde sauce)

🛡 FOOD SAFETY & INTERNAL TEMPERATURE: 165°F (74°C) MANDATORY USDA SAFE MINIMUM INTERNAL TEMPERATURE FOR ALL POULTRY
USDA Poultry Safety Minimum (≥165°F / 74°C) vs Dark-Meat Texture Target (175°F–185°F / 79°C–85°C): All poultry is microbiologically safe at the mandatory USDA minimum of 165°F (74°C). Cooking chicken thighs, drumsticks, and bone-in quarters to 175°F–185°F (79°C–85°C) melts collagen and yields a noticeably more tender, succulent bite.

👁 MASTER DONENESS CHECKPOINT:
Crackling mahogany skin and juicy breast meat reaching ≥165°F (74°C) internal temperature.

🔍 WHY IT WORKS:
Spatchcocking Mechanics: Flattening the chicken exposes all skin to direct radiant heat while positioning thighs toward the hotter back of the oven, cooking dark and white meat at the exact same rate.

⚠ TROUBLESHOOTING:
Breast overcooked before thighs finish: Always snip out backbone and flatten chicken completely.

🛒 US SUPERMARKET BRAND GUIDE

Aji Amarillo Paste: Inca's Food Aji Amarillo Paste
Fruity berry-like heat distinct to Peruvian cuisine. 🌶 📍
Hispanic specialty aisle.