

Grilled Cornish Hens with Sun-Dried-Tomato Pesto (for 4)

Since the tomato pesto here is made in a processor or blender, you have to make more than the small quantity needed. Use leftover pesto later in the week on grilled vegetables or fish. It's also a delicious addition to sandwiches, not to mention pasta.

Recipe Cookbook: Food and Wine Quick from Scratch

Chapter: Chicken and Other Birds

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Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 24 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

2/3 C oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained (or reconstituted)

2 garlic cloves, chopped

3 TBS grated Parmesan cheese

3/4 tsp salt

1/4 tsp fresh ground black pepper

1 TBS fresh lemon juice

1/2 cup olive oil

2 Cornish game hens, about 1 1/4 lbs each, halved

DIRECTIONS:

Light grill. In food processor or blender, mince tomatoes & garlic with Parmesan, salt, pepper & lemon juice. With machine running, add oil in a thin stream continue whirring till ingredients are well mixed.

With your fingers, loosen skin from breast meat of each hen, leaving the skin around the edge attached. For each half hen, spread 1 TBS of pesto under skin & 1 TBS over it. Cook them over moderate heat, skin-side down (for 12 minutes). Turn hens & cook till just done (about 12 more minutes).

Wine Recommendation: For this grilled dish, with its smoke, salt & acidity (from tomatoes), choose a wine that's simple & refreshing. Among the many options are Italian red wines with good acidity such as Chianti Classico or dolcetto.