

### Grilled Butterflied Saltbush Chicken with Charred Vegetables



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Delight in the distinctive flavor of native Australian green with this Grilled Butterflied Saltbush Chicken—a true Aussie delight reminiscent of the iconic Bay leaf. These leaves hit their peak when deep-fried, adding texture to salads, roasts, and veggies.

**SERVES 4 | PREPARATION 1hr | COOKING 45MIN | SKILL LEVEL MID**

### Ingredients:

- ¼ cup dried saltbush or bay leaves
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 2 tsp dried thyme
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ⅓ cup olive oil
- 1 whole chicken (about 1.8kg), butterflied.
- 2 red onions, quartered (with root end on)
- 2 eggplants, sliced 5mm thick lengthways
- 4 zucchinis, sliced 5mm thick lengthways

**Cook's Notes:** Oven temperatures are for conventional; for fan-forced (convection), reduce the temperature by 20°C. We use Australian tablespoons and cups: 1 teaspoon equals 5 ml; 1 tablespoon equals 20 ml; 1 cup equals 250 ml. All herbs are fresh (unless specified), and cups are lightly packed. Vegetables are medium-sized and peeled. Eggs are 55-60 g unless specified.

**Instructions:** Commence the recipe the night before. Use a mortar and pestle or spice grinder to grind saltbush (or bay leaves). Combine with cumin, garlic powder, cayenne pepper, thyme, 1 tablespoon of lemon juice, and half the oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Rub the chicken with the marinade on both sides, ensuring it reaches hidden joints. Marinate in the fridge for a minimum of 30 minutes or overnight.

Preheat a covered BBQ grill plate to medium-high heat. Allow the chicken to reach room temperature for 20 minutes, then place it on the grill skin side down. Cover with the lid (or a large upside-down saucepan if your BBQ lacks a lid). Cook for about 8 minutes or until the skin is golden. Flip

the chicken, cover again, and cook for an additional 15–20 minutes or until juices run clear when a skewer is pierced into the thigh. Transfer to a tray, cover with foil, and set aside to rest.

Brush vegetables with the remaining oil. Begin grilling the onions first (they take the longest) on the BBQ for 5 minutes or until charred on both sides. Add eggplant and zucchini, cooking for an additional 2–4 minutes or until charred. Season the veggies with salt and pepper and squeeze the remaining lemon juice over them. Serve with the chicken.

*Recipe and images from "Surfing the Menu" by Dan Churchill and Hayden Quinn*