

# Barbecue Spice— Roasted Chicken Drumsticks with White Barbecue Sauce



**YIELD** Serves 4 to 6

**TIME** 1¾ hours

## Why This Recipe Works

Roasting the drumsticks in a 350-degree oven until they reached 180 degrees allowed enough time for their abundant collagen to convert to gelatin, ensuring that each bite was tender and juicy. This cooking method also gently rendered the fat beneath the skin, further enhancing flavor and juiciness. A quick blast under the broiler improved browning and Maillard flavors. Dark-meat chicken is flavorful enough to stand up to bold spices, so we created this spice blend with to showcase the meat's versatility. We mixed hot water and oil into each spice mix to unlock water- and fat-soluble flavor compounds to round out and boost the flavor. Finally, we put together a white barbecue sauce to further the flavor appeal of the chicken.

## Gather Your Ingredients

### White Barbecue Sauce

¾ cup mayonnaise

## Before You Begin

- \* We developed these recipes with Diamond Crystal kosher salt. If using Morton kosher salt, which is denser, use only 2¼ teaspoons in the spice mixture for the

- 2** tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2** teaspoons granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon prepared horseradish
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

### Chicken

- 1** tablespoon kosher salt
- 1¼** teaspoons packed brown sugar
- 1¼** teaspoons pepper
- 1¼** teaspoons ground coriander
- 1¼** teaspoons ground cumin
- 1¼** teaspoons garlic powder
- 1¼** teaspoons onion powder
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ⅛–¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2** tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon warm tap water

chicken. Before applying the spice slurry, smooth the skin over the drumsticks so it is covering as much surface area as possible. This will help the skin render evenly and prevent the meat from drying out.

## Instructions

- 1. FOR THE SAUCE:** Whisk all ingredients in bowl until smooth. Refrigerate until needed. (Sauce can be refrigerated for up to 2 days.)
- 2. FOR THE CHICKEN:** Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Line rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil and set wire rack in sheet.
- 3.** Whisk salt, sugar, pepper, coriander, cumin, garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, and cayenne together in medium bowl. Add water and stir until all spices are hydrated. Let sit until spice mixture has thickened to paste, 2 to 3 minutes. Whisk in oil to make loose slurry.
- 4.** Pat drumsticks dry with paper towels. Holding 1 drumstick by bone end, roll in spice slurry until evenly coated on all sides. Let any excess slurry drip back into bowl, then arrange drumstick, skin side up, on prepared rack with thick end closer to edge of baking sheet. Repeat with remaining drumsticks, arranging pieces in 2 rows along length of sheet. Using brush or your fingers, dab any remaining slurry in bowl on tops of drumsticks.
- 5.** Roast until drumsticks register 180 degrees, 45 to 50 minutes, rotating sheet halfway through cooking. Turn on broiler and continue to cook until tops of drumsticks are well browned in spots, 2 to 3 minutes longer. Remove from oven and let rest for 10 minutes. Serve, passing sauce separately.

- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2½ pounds chicken drumsticks

### **For Bolder Flavor, Hydrate Spices with Water and Oil**

Before sliding our drumsticks into the oven to roast, we slather them with a slurry of heady spices that's moistened with a couple spoonfuls each of hot water and vegetable oil. Spice flavor compounds are largely fat-soluble; oil helps draw out those compounds so that their taste is as pronounced as possible. But some of the flavor compounds in spices are water-soluble, so it's also crucial to add water to the slurry to ensure that all the spices' complexities are fully realized. Water also softens the dry spices, making it easier for their flavor compounds to emerge into the oil. Once the chicken is cooked, the water has a tertiary function of helping the spices hold on to their volatile flavor compounds.



## A Strategic Arrangement Yields the Crispiest Skin

For well-rendered, mahogany skin, give the drumsticks plenty of air circulation by placing them on a wire rack set in a rimmed baking sheet. Arrange them so the bulbous sides face the edges of the pan, where it gets the hottest.

