

# Yotam Ottolenghi's chicken sofrito and smoky corn salad recipes

A deceptively simple chicken dish that's packed with flavour, plus a home-smoked delight that's perfect for summer

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**Yotam Ottolenghi**

guardian.co.uk, Friday 5 August 2011 22.59 BST

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Yotam Ottolenghi's chicken sofrito: The simple preparation belies the complexity of flavours at work in this classic Sephardic stew. Photograph: Colin Campbell for the Guardian

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## Chicken sofrito

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This relatively simple Sephardic dish yields many layers of comforting flavours. The corn salad that follows it makes a perfect match. If you have a pan that's wide enough to hold the whole chicken flat, butterfly the bird by cutting through the centre of the breast until it opens up (or ask a butcher to do it for you). Serves four.

**1 tbsp sunflower oil**

**1 small free-range chicken (about 1.5kg), butterflied or quartered**

**1 tsp sweet paprika**

**¼ tsp ground turmeric**

**¼ tsp sugar**

**Salt and black pepper**

**2½ tbsp lemon juice**

**1 large onion, peeled and quartered**

**Sunflower oil, for frying**

**25 garlic cloves, unpeeled**

**750g charlotte potatoes, peeled, washed and cut into 2cm dice**

Pour the oil into a large, shallow pan or casserole and place on a high heat. Lay the chicken flat in the pan, skin-side down, and sear for four to five minutes, until golden-brown. Season all over with the paprika, turmeric, sugar, a third of a teaspoon of salt, some pepper and a tablespoon and a half of lemon juice.

Turn over the chicken, add the onion and cover the pot with a lid. Reduce the heat to low and leave for 30 minutes, occasionally checking the amount of juice at the bottom of the pan: add a little water, if needed, so there's always around 5mm.

After the chicken has been cooking for 30 minutes, pour sunflower oil into a medium saucepan so that it comes 3cm up the sides. Bring up to medium-high heat and fry the garlic and potatoes in batches for about six minutes, until they take on some colour. Use a slotted spoon to transfer them to a paper towel. Sprinkle with salt, and repeat with the remaining potatoes and garlic.

After the chicken has been cooking for an hour, lift the bird from the pan and stir the potatoes and garlic into the cooking juices. Put the chicken on top of the potatoes and cook for another 30 minutes, by which time the meat should be falling off the bone. When serving, drizzle with a little fresh lemon juice.

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## **Smoky corn salad (V)**

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If you can't get corn with husks, don't have the right kit or are not too keen on playing around with smoke, just brush your corn with a little olive oil and cook it on a hot, ridged griddle pan for 10 minutes, turning frequently, then carry on with the instructions in the final paragraph. My thanks to [Sarit Packer](#) for this. Serves four.

**2 large corn cobs, in their husks**

**15g lemon thyme sprigs**

**1½ tbsp lime juice**

**½ tsp maple syrup**

**2 tbsp olive oil**

**1 green chilli, thinly sliced**

**Salt**

**10g each picked coriander, mint and parsley leaves**

**2 spring onions, thinly sliced**

Remove the husks from the corn and use 30g of the husks and the lemon thyme to line the base of an extra-large pan or wok into which you can fit a metal colander, rack or steaming basket. You'll also need to

be able to seal the pot with a tight-fitting lid.

Top and tail the corn cobs and cut each in two widthways. Put the pan with the husks and thyme on high heat and, once they begin to smoke (after about four minutes), put the corn in the colander, place inside the hot pan and cover tight with a lid. Leave on high heat for five minutes, remove from the heat, then leave, covered, for five minutes more. Take off the lid and set the pan aside until the corn comes to room temperature.

Stand each corn half on a work surface and, using a large, sharp knife and cutting from top to bottom, shave off rows of kernels. Try to cut deep enough into the cob so that some of the kernels come off in clusters – this isn't essential, it just looks good. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the lime juice, maple syrup, olive oil, chilli and some salt. Add the herbs and spring onion, toss and taste for seasoning. Gently mix in the corn and serve.

- Yotam Ottolenghi is chef/patron of [Ottolenghi](#) and [Nopi](#) in London.

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