

Gravy



You must attempt to make your own gravy if you haven't before. I promise you will NOT go back to that disgusting packet gravy again. It's so easy and is just delicious. I have a gravy jug too which separates the fat from the gravy when you pour it. A nifty little thing that's worth its weight in gold because I can lace my food in gravy!

This recipe is for chicken gravy but you can use meat of any kind to make a gravy.

You can either buy some chicken wings/drumsticks which cost next to nothing and make this gravy up days before you need it and freeze it. Or you can make it on the day that you want it and use the juices from the chicken that you are cooking. Let's assume you are going to be cooking a roast chicken and we'll use the whole bird but remember you can just as easily use chicken bits if you want.

Place the following in a roasting dish:

- 2 sticks celery snapped in half
 - 2 carrots, roughly chopped
 - 2 onions (don't even bother peeling them. Just throw them in. The skins will give the gravy some colour)
 - 3-5 bay leaves
 - 5 fresh sage leaves or a tsp of dried sage Some rosemary sprigs or a tsp of dried rosemary
 - 2 star anise
 - A couple of strips of bacon
 - Tablespoon red wine vinegar
 - 1 tbsp. corn flour (optional)
1. Nothing neat about it just throw everything into a roasting tin, add 100ml water then place your chicken on top and cook however you would usually cook your chicken. While it's cooking, all the lovely juices are going to drip down onto your vegetables and add flavour to this lovely gravy.

2. Once cooked, remove your chicken and place your tray onto the hob on a low heat. Use a potato masher to squash down all the vegetables and squeeze out all of their juices. Add a little stock or some boiling water. The amount depends on how much gravy you want to make - 300ml is more than enough. You need to let this simmer over the hob for approx. 15 mins.
3. It is at this point you can decide just how healthy you want to be. If you wish to add corn flour to thicken the gravy then now is the time. Mix your corn flour with a tablespoon of water to make a smooth paste and stir this into your gravy a little at a time until you have the consistency you want, mixing all the time. If you are doing this then skip to section 5.
4. I prefer not to add flour and let the gravy reduce down and thicken naturally. You need to keep scraping the bits off the bottom of the tray and stir the gravy constantly. Reduce down for another 10 mins
5. You now need to sieve the gravy into a gravy jug or into a saucepan to remove the vegetables and keep warm until you are ready to serve or cool it down and freeze it for another time. This is the best gravy ever. I promise you'll love it.

You can make this gravy whilst roasting any meat.

If you did want to make this ahead of time using chicken wings and drumsticks, just follow the recipe in exactly the same way but keep the chicken wings in the roasting pan the entire time and mash them down with the vegetables to release lots of flavour then sieve them out at the end.