

Chicken with Plums and Soy

Serves 4 Slightly adapted from Three Good Things...on a plate

8 bone-in, skin-on, free-range chicken thighs (or 1 small free-range chicken, cut into 8 pieces)

1 tablespoon sunflower oil

1–4 red, mild-to-medium-hot, fleshy chillies, to taste (optional)

4 garlic cloves, sliced

A thumb-sized piece of ginger, peeled and coarsely grated or thinly sliced (optional)

8 plums, halved and stoned

3 tablespoons soy sauce

A small bunch of cilantro, leaves only, chopped

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 375. Put the chicken thighs or chicken pieces in a roasting pan, drizzle with EVOO and season well with salt and pepper.

Roast for 30 minutes, turning once or twice. Meanwhile, halve and remove seeds of the chili, if using, then cut each into thin strips. After 30 minutes, take the chicken out of the oven and add the sliced chilis, garlic and ginger to the roasting tray. Turn the chicken again to make sure the aromatics are evenly distributed around and under the pieces.

Roast for a further 10 minutes. Tuck the plum halves around the chicken pieces and trickle over the soy. If there doesn't seem to be much liquid in the tray, add a few tablespoons of water (plum wine is an option as well). Return to the oven for 10–15 minutes until the plums are soft and yielding their juices. Baste the chicken and plums with the pan juices, then leave to rest in a warm place for 10 minutes.

Sprinkle the chicken with freshly chopped cilantro

Serve with noodles or plain rice. SWAPS: you could use prunes or dried apricots (ideally the plump, ready-to eat ones) instead of fresh plums.

Hugh's Three Good Things (Kindle Locations 3152-3157). Bloomsbury Publishing. Kindle Edition.