The Natural History of the Chicken

1 x 60
Most of us best know the chicken from our dinner plates: whether as thigh, wing, or drumstick. We barely pause a moment to consider the bird’s many virtues. This one-hour film by Mark Lewis expands the frontiers of popular awareness and delightfully allows us to discover how this small, common and seemingly simple animal can reveal itself to be on its own terms as complex and grand as any of God’s creatures. The film skips perfunctory expert commentary and focuses instead on ordinary people telling stories about their extraordinary chickens... and some are truly the stuff of legend.

Along the way we glimpse gallus domesticus in every environment and station. Karin Estrada’s Cotton swims in her swimming pool and watches television; Joseph Martínez’ flock spend blissful hours pecking for grit and taking dirt baths; we see chickens adorning cars, soaking up the spotlight in photo sessions, and walking the last mile towards the chopping block on their way to the dinner table. The film allows us to rethink our relationship with a creature we have previously taken for granted while at the same time it provides a lens by which we look at ourselves. Finally, it all adds up to a “natural history” for an animal like no other.

CREDITS
Writer/Director: Mark Lewis
Executive Producers: Ron Devillier, Brian Donegan
Photo Credit: Reistlin Magere courtesy of Shutterstock