

BACK TO BASICS

Most homemakers realize that turkey is a fabulous year-round buy. But if you're accustomed to thinking of turkey just for holidays and parties, think again. What meat is as economical, nutritious and versatile as turkey, with delicious flavor that appeals to children and adults alike? And how many meats can boast almost guaranteed leftovers to provide the cook with a few holidays from the kitchen?

Some smaller families may be intimidated by the large size of whole turkeys, at first. Turkey parts, such as whole or half breasts or thighs, could be purchased instead.

But who's afraid of leftovers? Properly frozen, turkey leftovers can be kept up to three months. What a treasure to have handy in the freezer, the makings for casseroles, salads, sandwiches and soups!

Roasting turkey is one of the simplest operations, thanks to today's oven-ready variety. As the dinner cooks, think of all the free time you'll have to spend with the baby, do the housework or catch up on work brought home from the office on a weekend.

Follow these step-by-step instructions for perfect roast turkey, every time.

How to Buy

How many guests will there be for dinner? Do you want leftovers for future meals? Larger birds have a larger proportion of meat to bone. For turkeys under 12 pounds, allow 3/4 to 1 pound per serving. For larger birds, you can allow slightly less.

How to Thaw

Do not thaw turkey at room temperature. Keeping turkey in its original bag, choose from one of two methods:

Allow turkey to thaw in the refrigerator by placing it in a tray on a refrigerator shelf. It takes three to four days (24 hours for each five pounds of turkey).

For faster thawing, cover turkey with cold water, changing water frequently. Allow a half hour thawing time per pound of turkey.

Do not refreeze uncooked turkey. Refrigerate or cook turkey as soon as it's thawed.

Commercially stuffed turkeys should not be thawed before roasting. Never stuff and freeze your own turkey. Only commercial methods are safe.

How to Prepare

Remove bird from wrapper. Remove giblets and neck from body and neck cavities. Rinse turkey with cold water and pat dry with paper towels. Place turkey on a rack in a shallow open pan.

To prepare and roast the bird in the quickest manner, prepare the stuffing separately and bake in a covered casserole for the last hour with the turkey.

If you choose to roast turkey with the stuffing, add stuffing in body and neck cavities. Do not stuff until ready to roast the turkey. If no stuffing is used, rub the cavities with salt and add a few pieces of onion, carrots and celery for additional flavor, if desired.

Hold stuffing in by skewering or lacing closed the body cavity or block the opening with the heel slice from a loaf of bread. Use a skewer or toothpick to close the neck cavity.

Tie legs to the tail or tuck them into the band of skin or wire hook lock. Tuck wing tips under the turkey to make them lie flat.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F, while preparing for roasting. Place bird breast side up on rack in the roasting pan. Brush with butter or fat. Insert the meat thermometer into the center of the thickest part of the thigh or breast, not touching the bone.

Place a tent of lightweight aluminum foil, shiny side down, over the turkey to prevent over-browning. Remove the last half hour of roasting to brown.

Follow the roasting chart for approximate cooking time required. Turkey is done when the meat thermometer registers 180 to 185 degrees F. The thick part of the drumstick should feel soft when pressed with a thumb and forefinger. The drumstick should move easily. Stuffing should reach 165 degrees F, to be sufficiently cooked.

Cooking times for turkey may vary, due to oven temperature regulators, the shape of the turkey and the degree of thawing. So check for doneness about one hour before the estimated roasting time and continue to check frequently until done.

Allow turkey to stand at room temperature 15 to 20 minutes for easier carving.

COOK WITH AMERICAN DARING

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Americans are adventurous souls. Never ones to cling to traditions, they are experimenters, innovators, seekers of the new and different.

This is reflected in cooking, too, as American homemakers have taken on ethnic cuisines-- French, Italian, Chinese, Mexican -- and improvised with American ingredients.

The most American of birds is the turkey. We've come a long way from the wild version served by our ancestors for the First Thanksgiving. With the aid of turkey growers and processors today's turkey is plump, juicy and ready-to-roast, right from the supermarket.

Since today's roast turkey has been made so simple to master, it's time to explore new taste sensations for turkey -- just as a challenge to try something different.

Herewith, some good ideas for turkeys. Some are marinades, some are basting sauces, others are stuffings. Mix and match your own combinations as much as you dare!

Chinese Marinade

- 2 cups soy sauce
- 2 cups catsup
- 3 cloves fresh garlic, minced
- 1 piece ginger (1 inch long), finely minced
- 2/3 cup honey
- 1/2 cup dry vermouth
- 1/4 cup oyster sauce*
- 1/4 cup hoisin sauce*
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil*
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Combine all ingredients. Marinate turkey before roasting and let stand several hours in refrigerator before roasting, turning frequently. Brush marinade on turkey once during roasting.

Garlic Marinade

- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 6 cloves fresh garlic, finely chopped
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 cup oil
- 1/2 cup wine vinegar

Combine all ingredients. Marinate turkey an hour or more, turning frequently.

African Marinade

- 1/2 cup freshly grated coconut
- 10 cloves fresh garlic
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1 cup half and half
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1 1/2 cups boiling water

Combine all ingredients except water in a blender or food processor. Add water and simmer for 15 minutes. Refrigerate overnight. Marinate turkey in sauce for several hours, turning frequently.

Tagliarini Dressing

- 1 (12 ounce) package tagliarini
- 2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1/3 cup finely chopped green onions
- 1 cup butter or margarine
- 2 teaspoons dry Italian herbs, crumbled
- 1 teaspoon herb seasoned pepper
- 1 (6 ounce) package cheese and garlic croutons (3 cups)
- 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Cook tagliarini as package directs. Drain well. Meanwhile, cook mushrooms and onion in butter just until tender. Add herbs and pepper. Toss with drained tagliarini. Add croutons, parsley and cheese. Toss until well mixed. Makes dressing for 8 to 10 servings.

Note: Dressing may be made ahead and turned into a casserole. Cover and bake in same oven with turkey 25 to 30 minutes until heated. Dressing should be refrigerated until ready to bake.

Buttery Mushroom Stuffing

- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion, or more
- 1 cup butter
- 1/3 cup chopped or snipped parsley
- 2 teaspoons celery seed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 12 cups lightly packed, day-old bread cubes

Cook mushrooms and onions in butter just until tender, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Mix in remaining ingredients except bread. Toss all with bread cubes, mix well. Makes enough stuffing for a 14 pound turkey. Or, spoon into buttered casseroles and bake in a 325 degree oven for 30 minutes.

Mediterranean Basting Sauce

- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon basil, finely crushed

Melt butter or margarine and combine with oil, lemon juice and basil. Brush over skin of turkey. Roast turkey, basting occasionally with pan drippings.

Italian Basting Sauce

- 1/3 cup butter or margarine
- 1/4 teaspoon powdered oregano
- 2 tablespoons dry red wine

Melt butter or margarine and combine with oregano and wine. Brush over skin of turkey. Roast turkey, basting occasionally with pan drippings.

It's Turkey Time

When is it time for roast turkey? If your answer is Thanksgiving, period, you're missing out on enjoying one of the most delicious, economical, nutritious foods in the meat case of the supermarket.

Of course, a roast turkey is absolutely essential for Thanksgiving and perfect for all other holiday dinners. But consider these other great "excuses" for a delicious turkey dinner.

• For houseguests at their first dinner -- You know how hectic it can get when guests stay over. Save yourself some work by roasting a turkey early on and you'll have some cooked meat ready to use as a filling for crepes or quiche, salads or sandwiches.

• For a football tailgate party -- There's a lot of good outdoor eating still ahead as football fans pack baskets of food for picnics in stadium parking lots. Roast and carve your turkey just before the game. Turkeys make excellent picnic fare.

• For a holiday cocktail party -- If you've tried of spending time making tedious hors d'oeuvres for cocktail parties, roast a turkey instead. So easy and economical. Serve the turkey with various kinds of breads and spreads for make-it-yourself sandwiches. Carve a few slices from the bird to get guests started, then let them help themselves.



James Beard's Favorite Roast Turkey

Much of this fashion of roasting a turkey came from my family. I have changed and embellished it a bit, and the final recipe is the one I use for Thanksgiving or other traditional holiday dinners.

- 18 to 20 lb. turkey with the liver, gizzard and heart reserved
- 1 onion, stuck with 2 whole cloves
- 1 sprig parsley
- salt
- 1/2 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 quart water
- 1/2 lemon
- 8 - 12 tbsp. butter, softened
- freshly ground pepper
- strips of fresh or salt pork
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/4 cup Cognac or Madeira (optional)

Stuffing

- 1 to 1 1/2 cups butter
- 1 cup finely chopped shallots (or substitute scallions)
- 1 1/2 tsp. dried tarragon, or 3 tsp. tarragon, finely chopped
- salt
- 1 1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 cup pine nuts
- 10 - 12 cups fresh bread crumbs
- 1 or 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped (optional)

Make the stuffing first. Melt 1/2 cup of the butter in a heavy skillet. Add shallots or scallions and the tarragon, and allow to cook until shallots are just wilted. Add 1 tbsp. salt, the pepper and pine nuts, and then additional melted butter as needed: 1/2 to 1 cup, depending on the amount the shallots have absorbed. Finally, add the crumbs and toss well. Taste the mixture and, if required, add more of any of the ingredients. A clove or two of garlic may also be added.

Remove the neck from the bird, if that has not already been done, and put neck in a 2-qt. saucepan with the liver, gizzard, heart, and the onion, parsley, 2 tsp. salt and the thyme. Add the water, bring to a boil and boil for 5 mins., skimming. Then reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 1 hour. Drain and reserve stock for the sauce. If you like, chop the gizzard, heart and liver to add to the sauce.

Rub the inside of the turkey with the lemon. Fill the body cavity and neck cavity with stuffing, but not too tightly. Truss the turkey. Close the vent; either secure with skewers and twine or sew it up. Tie the legs together firmly, and then tie them to the tail of the bird. Massage the turkey well with about 4 tbsp. softened butter, and then salt and pepper it. Line a rack with strips of fresh or salt pork.

Set the rack in a fairly shallow roasting pan and place the turkey, breast side down, on the rack. Roast for 1 hour in an oven preheated to 350 F. Remove the pan from the oven, turn the turkey on one side and rub with half of the remaining softened butter. Return the turkey to the oven, and roast for another hour. Remove the pan from the oven, turn the turkey on its back and rub the breast with the remaining turkey butter. Return to the oven and continue roasting till the turkey is done.

Remove from the oven and place on a hot platter. Allow the turkey to rest for 15 minutes if being served hot. If being served tepid, let it cool gently at room temperature. Remove all the twine and skewers.

For the sauce, pour off the fat, save 4 tbsp. from the roasting pan. Discard the excess fat. Over medium heat, add the flour to the pan and blend thoroughly, scraping to loosen bits of caramelized dripping. If there are any juices on the platter beneath the turkey, add those (skimmed of fat) as well. Gradually stir in 2 cups or more of the turkey stock and cook, stirring constantly, till the mixture thickens. Correct the seasoning. Add the giblets, if you like, and Cognac or Madeira, and simmer about 5 minutes. Serve with the turkey and stuffing.

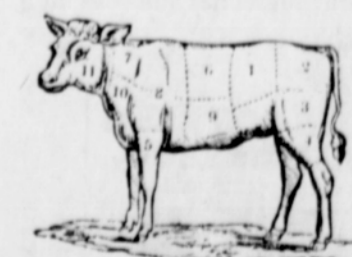
JAMES BEARD
JAMES BEARD'S AMERICAN COOKERY
(Publishers: Little, Brown)

Easier Slicing

To cut thin slices of turkey breast or scaloppine, partially freeze the breast first to firm up slightly. It makes slicing easier.

A Festive Flavor

Before stuffing turkey for roasting, swish the cavity with brandy for a really good flavor.



VEAL SUBSTITUTE

Use sliced and pounded turkey breast for high-priced veal in any recipe that calls for veal scaloppine; the turkey slices are frequently more juicy and tender!

Time chart for roasting stuffed turkey in preheated 325° oven

Because turkeys vary from one to another due to conformation, variety, etc., cooking times can be only approximate. Because of this it would be well to allow an extra half hour of roasting time in case the turkey needs that extra cooking. Check for doneness during last hour of roasting.

READY-TO-COOK WEIGHT	APPROXIMATE COOKING TIME	THERMOMETER
6 pounds	2 1/2 - 3 hours	All 180 to 185° F.
8 pounds	3 - 3 1/2 hours	
12 pounds	4 - 4 1/2 hours	
16 pounds	5 hours	
20 pounds	5 1/2 hours	



Encore! Encore!

The turkey was a smashing success. Now you'll want to bring it back for an encore. The best way to assure a flawless repeat performance is with careful planning immediately after the star's debut.

After your turkey dinner, remove the stuffing and refrigerate it separately. Remove the meat from the carcass and bag the pieces into family size meal portions.

Package leftovers according to use. For example, make up packets of turkey slices for hot turkey sandwiches. Bag turkey tidbits for casserole dishes. Bigger turkey chunks might be saved for turkey salads. Save the carcass for soup or turkey chowder.

If you don't plan to use the turkey within a few days, freeze it for longer storage. Try some of these delicious ways to use turkey leftovers:

• Make a turkey stir-fry dish. Use slivers of turkey, fresh bean sprouts and whatever veget-

ables you have on hand. You may be able to recycle the vegetables from the dip or relish tray left over from your turkey dinner the night before. Sliver the vegetables before stir-frying. When all vegetables are crisp-tender, season with soy sauce and serve with rice.

• Bits of turkey can be ground or chopped finely by hand or with a food processor and mixed with leftover mashed potatoes, chopped onion and an egg for a binder, shaped into cylinders, then rolled in bread crumbs or cracker crumbs and deep-fried. Serve these croquettes with leftover turkey gravy.

• For a Polynesian turkey salad, combine turkey chunks with canned pineapple chunks, Chinese pea pods and sliced celery. Top with an oil and vinegar dressing seasoned with soy sauce, syrup from the pineapple, dry mustard and sesame seeds.

• For an Oriental-style salad, julienne turkey meat. Combine with shredded lettuce, bean sprouts, chopped green onion and canned chow mein noodles. Toss with a dressing of oil and soy sauce and a touch of sugar.

Bright Touches for the Bird

When roasted to a golden brown, a whole turkey is a magnificent entree. To further enhance its presentation, you may want to try one of these garnishing ideas.

• Surround turkey with clusters of red and green grapes interspersed with shiny lemon leaves.

• String fresh cranberries and zig-zag them across the turkey breast like colorful jewels.

• Line the turkey platter with pine boughs (washed carefully first) and lay turkey over the greenery.



• Cluster bunches of watercress around the turkey.

• If you've made a fruit stuffing or have glazed the turkey with a fruit glaze, garnish the platter with orange slices and watercress to carry out the fruit theme.

• Whole fresh or spiced apples can be arranged around the turkey with bunches of parsley or watercress.

• Circle turkey with small green and red peppers and basil leaves. This is especially appropriate for a turkey with an Italian style stuffing.

• Garnish turkey with parsley sprigs and cherry tomatoes nestled in between.

TURKEY STUFFING



Old Fashioned Stuffing

- 1 (1 1/2 pound) loaf day-old bread
- 3 cups chopped onion
- 2 1/2 cups chopped celery, including tops
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons poultry seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

Remove crusts from bread if desired. Cut bread into 1/2-inch cubes to measure 3 quarts; set aside. Sauté onion and celery in butter in a large skillet, just until tender. Add to bread along with remaining ingredients. Toss lightly but thoroughly until well mixed. Turn into two buttered 2-quart baking dishes (or one 3 1/2-quart dish). Cover. Bake in a 350 degree F. oven for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake 10 minutes longer. Makes about 8 to 10 cups after baking. For moister stuffing: add 1/2 to 3/4 cup chicken broth.

Fruited Variation: add 1 1/2 cups each diced apple and whole fresh cranberries.

Turkey-- What's In It For You?

So good to eat, turkey is good for you, too. While it is lower in fats, calories and cholesterol than most other meats, turkey is also higher in protein.

Turkey is one of the most economical meats so you get good nutrition for a good price every time you serve turkey.

Compare the nutritional profile of turkey against other meats in the chart below. These statistics, based on information from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, show graphically the great value you get from turkey.

Nutritional Value in a 100 mg. (3.5 oz.) Serving

Food	Calories	Protein grams	Total Fat grams	Saturated Fat grams
Whole Turkey (with skin)	205	28.0	9.5	2.8
Turkey Drumsticks (with skin)	210	27.8	10.1	3.1
Turkey Ham	128	18.9	5.1	1.7
Whole Chicken (with skin)	234	26.8	13.3	3.7
Lean Ground Beef	286	24.2	20.3	9.7
T-Bone Steak (lean & fat)	347	23.6	27.2	13.1
Beef Rump Roast (lean & fat)	347	23.6	27.2	13.1
Pork Loin Chops (lean & fat)	391	24.7	31.7	11.4

An Unbeatable Value

Pound for pound, turkey is one of the cheapest, most nutritious protein sources you can buy, and it's low in fat, too.

An Early Bird

Domesticated turkeys were first imported into Spain from America in 1498.