

ROASTED TURKEY BREAST (6-8 LBS)

THAWING METHODS

The experts recommend refrigerator thawing. However, if you are short on time and need a quicker method for thawing, submerge the turkey in cold water. Thawing turkey at room temperature allows bacterial growth and is not recommended.

REFRIGERATOR THAWING

Thaw breast side up in its unopened wrapper on a tray in the refrigerator.

Allow at least one day of thawing for every four pounds of turkey.

COLD WATER THAWING

Thaw breast side down in its unopened wrapper in cold water to cover.

Change the water every 30 minutes to keep surface cold.

Estimate minimum thawing time to be 30 minutes per pound for whole turkey

Place thawed or fresh turkey, breast up on a flat rack in a shallow pan, 2-2 1/2 inches deep.

Brush or rub skin with oil to prevent the skin from drying and to enhance the golden color.

Insert oven-safe meat thermometer deep into the meatiest part of the breast, but not touching the bone. For turkey breast, the thermometer should read 165°F when inserted into the meatiest part of the thigh. (Source: American Turkey Federation)

Place in a preheated 325°F oven.

When the turkey is about two-thirds done, loosely cover the breast with a piece of lightweight foil to prevent overcooking the breast.

Use this roasting schedule as a guideline; start checking for doneness 1/2 hour before recommended end times. Allow the turkey breast to stand for 15-20 minutes before carving the bird.

4 to 6 lbs. breast...1 1/2 to 2 1/4 hrs.

6 to 8 lbs. breast...2 1/4 to 3 1/4 hrs.

UNSTUFFED WHOLE TURKEY

8 to 12 lbs.....2 3/4 to 3 hrs.

12 to 14 lbs.....3 to 3 3/4 hrs.

14 to 18 lbs.....3 3/4 to 4 1/4 hrs.

18 to 20 lbs.....4 1/4 to 4 1/2 hrs.

20 to 24 lbs.....4 1/2 to 5 hrs.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS, WATER CHESTNUTS AND MUSHROOMS

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. Brussels sprouts, fresh or frozen
2 Tbsp butter
½ lb. mushrooms, sliced
1 can (16 oz) water chestnuts, drained
1 tsp thyme
½ tsp ginger
Salt & pepper to taste

Serves 6

Steam Brussels sprouts until tender; if frozen until heated through. Sauté mushrooms, water chestnuts and seasonings in butter until mushrooms are tender. Dish sprouts onto plate; top with mushroom mixture. 6 servings.

ROASTED WINTER VEGETABLES

INGREDIENTS

4 cups cubed potatoes, sweet potatoes, turnips, rutabagas, carrots, parsnips, onions – any combination
2 tsp chopped fresh rosemary
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 tsp kosher or sea salt
1 tsp fresh ground pepper

Serves 4-6

Preheat the oven to 425°F

Peel the vegetables and cube into 1/2-inch pieces (I leave the peeling on the potatoes). Add rosemary to the olive oil in a small bowl, then toss with the vegetables to coat. Season with salt and pepper.

Line the bottom of a baking sheet with parchment paper or coat with vegetable cooking spray. Spread the vegetables on the sheet; bake 35-45 minutes or until tender.

SWEET POTATO PIE WITH A KICK

INGREDIENTS

2 cups cooked, peeled and mashed sweet potatoes
4 Tbsp butter or margarine
3 eggs, beaten
1 tsp vanilla
1 cup sugar
1 tsp freshly grated nutmeg
1 Tbsp lemon juice
1/2 cup bourbon
1 unbaked pie crust (I use a frozen crust for this one!)

Serves 8

You can boil, bake or, as I do to speed things up, microwave the sweet potatoes until very tender. Peel and mash thoroughly.

Mix all ingredients together and pour into unbaked pie crust. Place in a 400°F oven and immediately lower the temperature to 325°F, and bake about 45 minutes or until the center of the pie sets (a table knife inserted into the center should come out clean).

The alcohol cooks out completely, but you're left with the flavor – and the wonderful aroma.

Any leftover filling is tasty baked alone in a small dish and eaten like a pudding!

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CORNBREAD DRESSING

INGREDIENTS

4 cups crumbled cornbread
(see cornbread recipe)
2 13-14 ounce cans chicken
broth
1 large onion, chopped
3 ribs celery, chopped
Sage, salt, pepper to taste
3 eggs
1 cup butter, melted

Serves: 8

In a large bowl combine the cornbread and chicken broth, and allow to soak. Saute the onions and celery until tender. Add the onions, celery, sage, salt and pepper to taste. Add eggs and melted butter, mixing thoroughly. Place the mixture in a 9 x 13-inch baking pan. Bake in a 350°F oven for 1 hour, 20 minutes.

Note: The chicken broth may vary, depending on the texture of your cornbread. The resulting mixture should be thick and just a bit soupy – otherwise it will be very dry upon completion.

CORNBREAD

INGREDIENTS

2 cups yellow corn meal
1/2 cup flour
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp baking soda
3 Tbsp sugar
2 tsp baking powder
4 eggs
1 1/4 cups buttermilk (or
milk)
1/2 cup vegetable oil

Serves 6-8

Mix all dry ingredients together. Stir eggs into buttermilk and add to dry mixture. Pour the cornbread batter into skillet and bake in a 375°F oven. Cook bread until it has a golden brown crust (approximately 25-30 minutes).

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups yellow corn meal
3/4 cup flour
1 tsp salt
4 tsp baking powder
2 eggs, beaten
1 1/4 cups buttermilk (or
milk)
1/4 cup vegetable oil

Serves 6-8

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Thanksgiving Day Queue Sheet

THE DAY BEFORE

1. Complete shopping
2. Have turkey thawed. If it remains frozen, use the cold water thawing method
3. Make cornbread for dressing, cool completely and wrap
4. Make sweet potato pie, refrigerate

THANKSGIVING DAY

Prep time: 1 hour

Total cooking time: 5 hours with one oven

Timetable for 2 p.m. dinner

9 a.m.: Put turkey in oven

9:15 a.m.: Prep of dressing ingredients, roasted veggies

10:15 a.m.: Sauté celery and onions for dressing

10:30 a.m.: Combine dressing ingredients, refrigerate

10:30-11:30 a.m.: Chill out, set the table, have a coffee
-- You've worked hard!

11:30 a.m.: Turkey should be nearing completion. Has it reached temperature yet?

11:45 a.m.: Remove turkey, reset oven temp and put dressing in the oven. When turkey has set for 15 minutes, cover loosely with foil to keep warm.

Noon: Prepare cranberry sauce, put rolls on baking sheet. Go over meal details, table settings, beverage list. If you're serving wine, is it chilled? Is glassware ready for guests

1 p.m.: Mix together roasted vegetables and toss with rosemary, olive oil, salt and pepper. Set pie out of refrigerator.

1:15 p.m. Check dressing for doneness, adjust oven temp, put roasted vegetables in the oven.

1:20 p.m.: Steam Brussels sprouts and sauté mushrooms and water chestnuts.

1:45 p.m. Combine Brussels sprouts ingredients in covered dish to keep warm.

2 p.m.: Remove roasted vegetables and transfer to a covered serving dish. Adjust oven temp and put rolls into oven.

2:10 p.m. Remove rolls and transfer to a serving container, uncover serving dishes and carve first slices of turkey. You're done!

Thanksgiving Dinner for 4-6

Turkey, 6-8 lb. breast

1 dozen eggs

1 lb. butter

1 qt buttermilk

1 lb. yellow cornmeal

1 lb. All-purpose flour

Baking powder

Baking soda

Vegetable oil spray

Small bottle vegetable oil

1 deep dish frozen piecrust

16 ounces canned water chestnuts

2 14 ounce cans chicken broth

Jellied cranberry sauce

Brussels sprouts (1 lb fresh or frozen)

3 Sweet potatoes (2 for pie, 1 for roasted vegetables)

1 small potato

1 sweet onion

1 parsnip or turnip

1 butternut squash or carrots

3 ribs celery

1/2 lb fresh mushrooms

Rosemary, fresh from the produce section

Brown and serve rolls

Thyme

Ginger, ground root, or buy ginger root and prepare your own

Vanilla

Nutmeg, ground or buy fresh and grate

Sage

Kosher or sea salt

Sugar

Whiskey, 1/2 pint