

Happy Thanksgiving
November 25th's biggest challenge for cooks
How to cook a turkey?!

The biggest challenge is that the bird is 20-30 pounds and our ovens are made to cook things with less volume. So, for that we need to prepare ourselves and the bird. This is the recipe that has always worked for me, at home or at Rouge Restaurant. Bon Courage.

First Clean the bird. Chop off , and save wings and neck. Empty bird and save livers and gizzards. Wash off all blood.

Bird Bath Time

1 Turkey, 20-24 pounds

BRINE

1 ½ cup Kosher salt

3 Gallons of Cold water

Add Kosher Salt and Water, Mix well and submerge the Turkey for 12 Hours in its brine bath using a way to keep the bird under water. Keep in refrigerator After 12 hours, rinse the bird, pat dry and put into refrigerator for 2 hours to completely dry its skin.

BEGIN YOUR STOCK.

STOCK

2 Turkey wings

1 Turkey neck

2 Carrots

2 Celery Stalks

1 Spanish Onion

1 Bunch Parsley

5 Thyme sprigs

2 Bay Leaves

12 Cups of Cold Water

1 oz grapeseed oil

Into a stock pot add grapeseed oil, wings, neck

Sliced Carrots, Sliced Celery stalks, Diced Onion, Parsley, Bay leaves, Thyme Sprigs. Cover with the 12 cups of water and simmer for 2 hours.

Strain into Chinois and store in Fridge.

One hour before cooking the turkey, remove it from the refrigerator and let sit until it reaches room temperature. turn oven on to 450 degrees.

STUFFING

1 Pound Minced Turkey Bacon

1 Minced Turkey Liver

1 Chopped Gizzard

2 cups of Chestnuts, Peeled, Cooked and Chopped.

1 ½ Cup Dried Cranberries

1 Onion thinly sliced

1 Cup of Dried Abricots

1 Stalk of Celery thinly sliced

1 teaspoon of chopped fresh thyme

1 loaf of diced sourdough bread, toasted

1 ½ Cup of Chopped Italian Parsly

4 Ounces of Cognac

2 Pinch of Kosher Salt and Black Peppercorn

1- 1 ½ Cups of Turkey Stock, Depending on desired moistness

1) Roast the Chestnuts in the oven for 20 minutes.

2) Cook Turkey Bacon, Liver and Gizzard in a Large heavy pan over Medium heat with 2 Tablespoons of grapeseed oil for 12 minutes while stirring.

3) Add onion, celery, thyme and cook stirring frequently until the onion are tender. App 10 minutes.

4) Transfer the cooked ingredients into a mixing bowl.

5) Add Cranberries, Abricots, Chestnuts, Parsley, Cognac, Salt and Pepper.

6) Boil your Turkey Stock then, add enough stock so that the stuffing will hold together inside the bird.

STUFFING MUST BE HOT

Oil the Roast Pan

Stuff the turkey with the hot stuffing, and rub its skin with a stick of softened butter. Salt and Pepper the bird. Place the bird on its back in the Roast Pan.

Put the pan into the blistering oven. Roast for 20 minutes, then turn the oven temp down to 385 degrees.

Roast for 1 hour, then baste every 15 minutes for the remaining cooking time.

Take the turkeys temperature in the fattest part of its thigh. It should read 135-145 degrees (if not, leave in the oven for a few more minutes). Otherwise, take it out and place on platter, it will continue to cook for the next 20 minutes, while you make your sauce.

Pour off $\frac{1}{2}$ the fat from the roast pan. Place the pan over high heat and add 2 cups of the turkey stock and deglaze the pan. Cook $\frac{1}{2}$ way down and Serve.

Turkey Cooking Time

12 pound = 2 hours

16 pound = 2 $\frac{1}{2}$

20 pound = 3 hours

See you next week for your side dishes.

Chef

William Merelle