



pilot
light
Greg
Melikov

King turkey

For a perfect bird, cook it upside down

When it comes to Thanksgiving, I am a traditionalist. I must have turkey on that day, accompanied by sufficient servings of stuffing and football — not necessarily in that order — or I freak out.

But over the years I have become less of a purist concerning preparation of the annual feast, particularly the big bird.

My latest experiment produced the most beautifully golden browned 16-pound turkey since I began trying different ways to roast the king of fowl.

I call it the upside-down turkey.

The upside-down roasting kit consists of half a lemon, sage, butter, V rack, shallow roasting pan, two pot holders, pastry brush and foil.

FIRST, AFTER removing the bag of giblets, neck, etc., rinse and pat the turkey dry. Rub the breast and neck cavities with the cut side of the lemon, then some sage. Rub more sage all over the outside, then some butter.

Secondly, when you stuff the bird, place the turkey on its back on the V rack in the roasting pan. Fill the breast cavity and close the opening. Flip the turkey on its breast, stuff the neck and secure the opening.

Next comes the most important step: Don't turn the bird back on its back. Since even in self-basting turkeys the first portion to brown and, ultimately, become dry is the breast, leave the back up during

the first half of roasting. The oven should be preheated at 450 degrees, then turned down to 325 degrees before the turkey goes in the oven.

Baste the bird every 30 minutes during the first hour. Using the pot holders, remove the pan from the oven, place it on a solid surface, dip the pastry brush in the juices and baste the parts you can reach. Then loosely cover the whole bird with foil and return it to the oven for another 1 1/2 hours, continuing to baste every 30 minutes.

Now, with the pan again on the solid surface, turn the bird on its back, using the pot holders. Loosely refold the turkey and return it to the oven, basting every 30 minutes for the next 1 1/2 hours. The bird should be golden brown except for a patch on the breast. Remove the foil, baste and let it brown. But check in 15 minutes — the breast will brown quickly.

After removing the turkey from the oven, lightly secure the foil around the pan. The bird will stay warm, whether you start carving in 30 minutes or it sits for a couple of hours.

When you carve, the butter will literally seep from the white meat. Even the legs will be juicy.

The upside-down turkey is just right — and tender.

PINE NUT STUFFING

5 tsp. margarine

1 cup uncooked long-grain rice
2 cups clear chicken broth
1 tsp. salt
1 cup finely chopped onion
1/2 cup pine nuts (optional)
5 sprigs parsley, chopped

Melt 3 tablespoons margarine in 2-quart saucepan over moderate heat. Add rice and stir several minutes until milky and opaque. Pour in broth, stir in salt and allow to boil, occasionally stirring. Cover pan, reduce heat to low and let rice absorb liquid, about 15 minutes. Melt rest of margarine in skillet over moderate heat, add onion and stir several minutes. Add nuts and stir several minutes until lightly browned. Stir nut mixture into rice with parsley. Stuff turkey.

GIBLETIZING THE GRAVY

Giblets, neck, etc.
1 onion, chopped
1/2 tsp. chicken flavor bouillon seasoning
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1/4 tsp. salt

Cover giblets, neck, etc., with water, add remaining ingredients and simmer 2 hours, adding water when necessary. Chop meat and put in gravy with enough liquid for consistency.

Monday, November 21, 1983 G&E

(P30)

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Handling tips for a safe turkey meal

Thanksgiving is traditionally the time when families and friends come together for large home-cooked feasts. It is also the time when doctors see a jump in illness due to improperly prepared food.

Feeding a large group calls for special measures. Phil Kirkwood, deputy chief of environmental services for the Michigan Department of Health, suggests using the same guidelines as Michigan restaurants do.

When preparing a turkey at home, Kirkwood offers these advice:

- Defrost your turkey in the refrigerator. This calls for some forethought, large birds may take a few days to completely thaw.
- Use a metal thermometer when cooking turkey. Insert the thermometer into the center of the bird and cook the turkey to at least 165 degrees.
- Wrap up leftovers and store them in the refrigerator or freezer. Don't leave turkey, dressing or gravy at room temperature more than 2 hours.
- Reheat leftovers to 165 degrees. Simply warming food can release bacteria instead of destroying it.

DICK CREGAR, chairman of the board of the Michigan Restaurant Association, adds one more suggestion to this list. He recommends cooking dressing outside the turkey. Cregar reasons that the thermometer in the turkey may register 165 degrees while the dressing inside is still not fully cooked.

Failing to bring the food up to 165 degrees allows bacteria, including staph toxins, strep and salmonella infectious organisms to remain and grow on food. "This does not mean that everyone eating warmed-up leftover turkey will pick up an infection," added Kirkwood, "but it certainly increases the chances."

Kirkwood and Cregar provide a food service sanitation course run by the Michigan Department of Public Health in conjunction with the Michigan Restaurant Association. Michigan is a leader in the nation in promoting sanitation efforts through education.

Hot breads

It's easy to serve yeast breads piping hot, even if they aren't fresh-baked. Simply put them in a brown paper bag or wrap in foil, sprinkle with a little water and heat 10 to 15 minutes in a 325° oven.

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