

Be sharp about knives

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will disown its ability to be cleaned properly.

Hard ceramic boards and clear plastic boards can dull knives faster than a fat chicken bone. For a great chopping board that can be placed in the dishwasher and not stained, try one of the newer milky-colored acrylic boards such as made by Nor-Pro. These boards aren't as hard and clean with ease. Large 11-by-17 boards may be purchased for about \$20.

If you or someone you know is

thinking about investing in cutlery this season or whenever, clip this article and take it with you to the store. Happy shopping!

Chef Larry Jones is interested in putting together a package, cooking-school tour of England and Europe. Those who would like to learn more about mini-lessons at such notable culinary schools as La Varenne and Wiltamer Pa-tisterie may send their names and addresses to: Chef Larry, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 35251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

clarification

Following is Marcia Sikarskie's recipe for Layered Cheese and Walnut Pate, which is suggested to be served along with Ginger Crackers. The recipe for the crackers was given in the Oct. 3 issue of Taste, in the story on make-ahead hors d'oeuvres.

LAYERED CHEESE AND WALNUT PATE

1/4 cup golden raisins
1/4 cup brandy or bourbon
1/4 cup water (hot)
1/4 cup butter, room temperature
8 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1-2 dashes Tabasco
8 ounces shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1 1/2 cups toasted walnuts, coarsely chopped.

Combine raisins with brandy or bourbon and hot water. Let stand 15

minutes or so, then strain, reserving liquid.

In mixer, cream butter with cream cheese until smooth. Add Dijon mustard, Worcestershire and Tabasco. Continue to cream until blended. Gradually beat in reserved liquid from raisins. Beat until fluffy. Add shredded cheddar and beat until evenly blended. Add reserved raisins and beat just until incorporated. Set aside.

Line a 5-cup mold or loaf pan with plastic wrap. Sprinkle 1/4 cup of toasted walnuts over the bottom. Spoon 1/4 of the cheese mixture over the walnuts and press gently. Top with 1/4 cup walnuts. Spoon remaining cheese mixture over the walnuts and press gently. Top with remaining walnuts. Cover with plastic wrap and chill up to two weeks. To serve — unmold and remove plastic wrap. Position on attractive serving plate. Let stand at room temperature one hour before serving. Accompany with Ginger Crackers.

It's time to carve the turkey

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you begin slicing. This will allow the juices to settle and make for a firmer, easier-to-carve bird.

When it comes time to carve, I reach for an apron and more or less end up scooping the meat onto the platters. Kind of ironic, eh? Here I am trying to give you lessons on how to carve the perfect bird this holiday season. I'm a firm believer in the old adage, "Those who can't do, teach," so if you are contemplating carving the holiday bird this year, follow these tips and get ready to reap the applause from your dinner guests.

FIRST OF ALL, you need a good sharp knife. Period. A sharp knife will do all the work for you. Beg, borrow or steal one, but whatever you do, if you want to do a professional job you will need a professional tool. You don't need anything too long, about eight inches will suffice, with a rounded or saber tip. But most importantly, it must be razor sharp.

Make the bird as accessible as possible. In other words, remove it from the roasting pan. You should be able to rotate the platter to get at all angles to please the demands for white meat, dark meat, wings and drumsticks. If the bird has been stuffed, remove the stuffing at this time.

Now the carving is ready to perform. With the carving knife in one hand and a large fork in the other, remove the legs by slicing straight down until you hit a bone. Put the fork down and grab the leg, twisting gently to slice through the joint and bone. Slice through the joint and place the legs on each side of the platter. Do the same with the wings.

You are now looking at a totally wingless and legless bird. If you prefer dark meat, turn the bird over. Directly under the area where the leg was removed, you will slice into a pocket of dark meat. For the novice cook and carver, there are dark meat sections on both sides of the bird.

Return the bird to its original upright position. Locate the breastbone and make an incision about three inches deep along both sides of the bone. Make the incision from front to back and repeat the procedure, angling the knife as you go deeper into the bird.

IF YOU ARE doing this correctly, you will be cutting directly on top of the rib cage and removing an angled piece of pure white breast meat in the process. After both breast sections have been completed, continue slicing the meat toward the tail where more additional dark meat is located.

Continue slicing until most of the meat has been removed or until someone comes to your rescue with a dry towel and a fresh cocktail. Not to be outdone, however, is the Ward Cleaver approach to carving. This is where a family of four sits down and all that is wanted or needed is pure white meat. Then, simple slices can be made directly onto the breast section of the carcass. When

the breast is cut paper thin, juices should flow like water.

No one ever really knew what happened to the remainder of the turkey. It probably ended up in the soup pot.

There are several other techniques that allow a person to carve a turkey in the kitchen, reassemble the bird and bring it to the table with nary a scratch. This involves carving a cooled bird and cutting the skin in precise dimensions for easy reassembly. Far too much bother for the James gang. Heck, you can't see the meat under all the potatoes, gravy, yams, green beans, cranberry sauce and relies anyway!

The important issue here is coming together to celebrate a tradition and to give thanks. Turkey is turkey, and it won't taste better if you cut it differently.

If all these directions sound a bit confusing, you might want to practice on a whole roast chicken. Anatomically, they're the same and you'll be surprised what a little practice can do.

PERFECT ROAST TURKEY

- 1 15-pound turkey
- 1 cup corn oil
- 8 1/2 tablespoons Beau Monde seasoning
- 1 1/2 tablespoons salt
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh garlic

Place turkey on a roasting rack, breast side up over another pan. Combine remaining ingredients in a blender and blend until well mixed. Use about half the marinade under the skin of the bird. Remaining liquid can be used as a basting liquid while turkey is being cooked. To cook allow 25 minutes per pound for a stuffed turkey and 15 minutes per pound for an unstuffed turkey. Preheat oven to 300 degrees for

BASIC TURKEY STUFFING

- 1 pound rolled seasoned sausage
- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1 stick butter or margarine (1/2 cup)
- 1 cup minced onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup celery, minced
- 1/2 cup green pepper, minced
- 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon sage
- 1 6-ounce package cornbread stuffing mix
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- salt and pepper to taste

Slice sausage 1/4-inch thick. Place in a large skillet and cover with water. Simmer until water is almost

evaporated and fat is rendered from the sausage. Discard any remaining liquid. Add beef and saute until both meats are browned. Drain meat on paper towels. Melt butter in same skillet. Add onion and garlic. Saute until golden. Add celery, green pepper and mushrooms and cook for five minutes. Combine meats, vegetables and remaining ingredients. Stuff a cleaned turkey and bake or place in a lightly greased casserole and bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

ROAST WILD TURKEY WITH CHESTNUT STUFFING

- 1 wild turkey, 10 ten pounds
- 1/2 pound sausage
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped celery stalks
- 1 teaspoon salt

- 1 teaspoon pepper
- dash thyme and chervil
- 1/4 cup fresh chopped parsley
- 1 cup chopped cooked chestnuts
- 1 stick melted butter or margarine
- 8 cups breadcrumbs made from day-old bread

Rinse and dry turkey inside and out. Sprinkle cavity with salt and pepper. In a large skillet, cook sausage meat till done. Add onion and celery and cook until glossy. Add herbs and chestnuts. Stir and transfer to a large mixing bowl. Toss in breadcrumbs and mix. Drizzle with melted butter, tossing while doing so. Stuff the bird but do not pack tightly. Close the cavity with skewers and place on a rack in a roasting pan, breast side up. Roast 25 minutes per pound at 300 degrees.

Chutney Cheese Ball is festive for holidays

AP — No grating, no stirring — your blender or food processor does the tough stuff when you make this flavorful appetizer cheese ball, just right for upcoming holiday festivities. Shape the cheese mixture into the traditional ball, form a log or circle, or press into a 3-cup mold lined with plastic wrap.

CHUTNEY CHEESE BALL

8 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, cubed
2 tablespoons margarine or butter
1/2 cup milk
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
dash bottled hot pepper sauce
1/2 cup finely chopped chutney
1/2 cup finely chopped pecans or peanuts
assorted crackers

Allow cheese and margarine to come to room temperature. Put 1/2 of cheese in blender container or food processor bowl; cover and blend until chopped. Remove and set aside; repeat with remaining cheese. Return all cheese to blender; add milk, margarine, Worcestershire sauce and hot pepper sauce. Cover and blend with several on-off turns until smooth. Turn cheese mixture into a mixing bowl. Stir in chutney. Cover; chill for several hours. Shape cheese mixture into a ball; roll in chopped pecans. Chill. Serve with assorted crackers. Makes 1 ball.

Nutrition information per 2-tablespoon serving: 105 cal., 1 g pro., 4 g carb., 8 g fat, 19 mg chol., 130 mg sodium. U.S. RDA: 11 percent calcium.

Salmon, rice dinner cooks well in microwave

AP — This salmon dinner takes to the microwave like a fish takes to water. Cook and serve the fish on a bed of well-seasoned rice and spinach. Always use quick-cooking rice for microwave dishes; long grain rice cooks no faster in the microwave oven than on the range-top.

SALMON WITH FLORENTINE RICE

- 1 pound fresh or frozen skinned salmon fillets
- 1 Tbsp. margarine or butter
- 1 tsp. lime or lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper

- 1 cup quick-cooking rice
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 tsp. instant chicken bouillon granules
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- one 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and well drained
- 1/2 cup sliced green onion
- 2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese

Thaw fish, if frozen. In a 1-cup glass measure combine margarine, lime juice, salt and pepper. Cook on 100 percent power (high) 30 to 40 seconds or until margarine is melted. Set aside.

Meanwhile, in a microwave-safe 8-by-8-by-2-inch baking dish combine rice, water, bouillon granules and nutmeg. Spread evenly in bottom of dish. Cover with vented microwave-safe plastic wrap. Cook on high 2 minutes. Stir in spinach, green onion and cheese; spread evenly in dish.

Arrange salmon fillets on top of rice mixture with thicker portions toward edges of dish. Turn under any thin portions of fillets to obtain an

even thickness of about 1/2 inch. Drizzle margarine mixture over fish. Cover with vented microwave-safe plastic wrap. Cook on high 8 to 10 minutes or until fish just flakes with a fork, giving dish a half-turn after 3 minutes. Serves 4.

Nutrition information per serving: 359 cal., 28 g pro., 23 g carb., 16 g fat, 42 mg chol., 299 mg sodium. U.S. RDA: 98 percent vit. A, 22 percent thiamine, 14 percent riboflavin, 47 percent niacin, 27 percent calcium, 23 percent iron.

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