

10 Ways to Turkey

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Holiday gatherings are often all about tradition. Sometimes our nostalgia is tied to memories of food and family. Even if we want things to be the same, mixing it up can create new and exciting memories and also challenge the way things have always been.

Turkeys are not just for Thanksgiving dinner. In fact, many people are becoming more aware of the potential issues with the American narrative of the Thanksgiving story in relation to the Native people, and are considering how to celebrate, if at all. But there is no reason to do away with the delicious turkey feast altogether. With the plethora of ideas for leftovers shared in these pages, you don't need a holiday as a reason to roast a turkey on any Sunday and then feed the family for the entire week.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Nixing the turkey altogether, in favor of fish or vegan fare, is another great way to switch things up.

UNIVERSAL TURKEY TIP #1: In each of the different cooking methods listed, the turkey can be seasoned with your favorite rub, doused in your favorite basting fat, or brined with your favorite salts and acids.

UNIVERSAL TURKEY TIP #2: When seasoning a turkey, consider putting a large percentage of the seasonings, with fat, underneath the skin. This holds it in place to infuse the meat with more flavor during the cooking process.

Traditionally Roasted

Seasoned with your favorite rub and fat of choice (salted butter, olive oil, coconut oil, bacon fat). Lay the turkey in a roasting pan on roasting rack, breast side down. If your bird is small enough, you can flip it (hopefully not at anyone) at the end of the cooking process to crisp up the skin.

Temperature: 325 degrees F

Time: 15 minutes per pound unstuffed; about 18 minutes per pound stuffed

Tips: Roasting your bird breast side down helps the meat to stay juicy.

After removing from oven, cover with foil for 10 to 20 minutes before slicing.

Remove stuffing before slicing.

Deep Fried

Stories of deep-fried turkey fires litter the internet. But if done right and carefully, deep-frying a turkey can be a safe and satisfying accomplishment. While we offer the basics here, it is a good idea to research safety and best practices before attempting this for the first time.

Temperature: Start with low temps (275 degrees F) and increase heat to about 350 degrees F after you add the turkey to the oil. This will prevent some of the splattering that can occur.

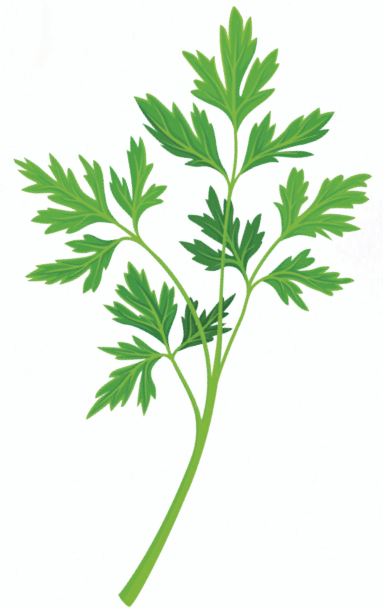
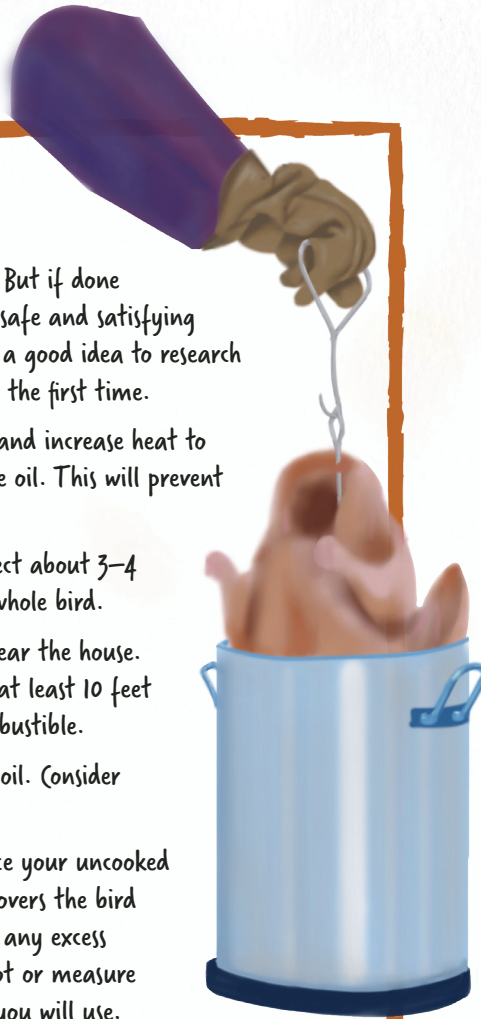
Time: This method cooks a turkey very quickly. Expect about 3-4 minutes per pound or 30-45 minutes for the whole bird.

Tips: For safety, never use a deep-fryer inside or near the house. It is best to set up the fryer on a flat surface at least 10 feet away from structures, trees, or anything combustible.

Work slowly when lowering the turkey into the oil. Consider wearing heavy-duty protective gear.

To determine how much oil you will need, place your uncooked turkey in the frying pot. Add water until it covers the bird by half an inch. Remove the turkey, draining any excess water back into the pot. Mark a line in the pot or measure the water left. This will be the amount of oil you will use. Be sure to completely dry the pot before adding the oil.

While the oil is heating up, take the turkey out of the fridge and completely dry it.



"Scarborough Fair" Poultry Herb Rub

This rub is so simple and can be made with either fresh or dried herbs. Use immediately with fresh herbs. If using dried herbs, the mix can be kept in a sealed container for 3 to 6 months.

- 1 small bunch parsley
- 1 small bunch sage
- 2-3 sprigs rosemary
- 4-5 sprigs thyme
- 4-5 sprigs marjoram
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper

Remove rosemary and thyme leaves from woody stems. Finely chop all herbs. Mix together with salt and pepper. Rub on poultry with choice of fat.

Sourcing Turkeys

Find out where to buy organic, heritage turkeys this year and support local with your purchases.

Where to Start:

Great Basin Community
Food Co-op
Greatbasinfood.coop

Truckee Food Hub
TahoeFoodHub.org



Spatchcocked on the Grill

Spatchcocking or butterflying is a method of cooking poultry in which you remove the backbone and lay out the meat flat for faster cooking. Best if your bird is on the smaller side; 10–14 pounds is perfect for this method, depending on the size of your grill.

Temperature: Prepare your grill using indirect heat to about 350 degrees F.

Time: Plan for about 7–8 minutes per pound.

Tips: Use sharp kitchen shears to cut out the backbone, starting at the tail, and save it to use in the gravy or for broth later.

Season as usual but be sure to season all sides.

If you do not have a grill or don't want to use one, spatchcocking can also be used to roast a turkey more quickly in the oven.



Smoked

Smokers have been all the rage over the past couple of years. According to the market research company NPD Group, Inc., American consumers spent more than \$4.9 billion on grills, smokers, and related products during the first year of the pandemic. If you are one of those buyers, this option might be a fun one to try!

Temperature: 250 to 300 degrees F

Time: Plan for about 45 minutes per pound of turkey, but budget in an extra 30 minutes just to be on the safe side. If you want to crisp up the skin, add 45 minutes in the oven at 350 degrees F.

Tips: Stick to smaller turkeys to fit in the smoker. 8–12 pounds unstuffed is usually perfect.

Cook your stuffing in the oven instead of in the bird.

Put a drip pan under your turkey to collect drippings for the gravy.



Spit-Roasted

Spit-roasting is basically rotisserie.

If you are fortunate enough to have a rotisserie roaster, follow the instructions to roast your bird, 12 pounds or smaller, with your choice of herbs and fats. If not, you can still spit-roast with a grill kit that will cost between \$50 and \$200. Do not spit-roast if stuffed.

Temperature: 325 to 350 degrees F

Time: Figure on about 15–20 minutes per pound.

Tips: Collect the drippings in a drip pan and/or roast potatoes under the bird to catch the drippings.

SAFETY NOTE #1: Stuffing that is roasted inside a turkey will be done when it reaches 165 degrees F. When eating it as leftovers, it should be reheated to the same temperature.

SAFETY NOTE #2: No matter which way you cook turkey, to be safe for consumption it should reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees F as read by a meat thermometer inserted 2–3 inches into the thickest part of the meat near a bone.



Brined

Brining is a method of soaking with a saltwater solution prior to cooking. For some, brining is a little bit of insurance in case of overcooking. Typically, a brined bird will retain more of its moisture when cooked.

Preparations: This can be done with any sized bird. Remove any giblets. Prepare saltwater by heating 1 quart of water and dissolving 1 cup of kosher salt into it. In a container large enough to hold the entire bird covered in water, add flavors like cloves, lemon peels, and herbs to the turkey. Pour in saltwater, then additional cold water until the turkey is covered completely. Soak for at least 12 hours in the refrigerator.

Tips: Weigh the turkey down with a plate or bowl before covering the container.

If your fridge's crisper drawer is leak proof and big enough, it can be used as your brining container to save space.

Only brine turkeys that have not been pre-processed.

Do not use if labeled "kosher," "pre-brined," "enhanced," or "self-basting."

Skip the salt in your seasoning.

Brined birds can sometimes cook a little faster than unbrined. Best to keep an eye on internal temperatures about an hour before estimated finished time.

BOURBON BRINED: For something really special, add $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup bourbon plus $\frac{3}{4}$ cup maple syrup (or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup brown sugar dissolved in 2 cups water) to your brine solution.

Braised

Braising is a process of cooking meat in liquid about halfway covered, generally on the stovetop with vegetables, but it can also be finished in the oven. In this method, the turkey will be pre-cut into breast, thigh, and leg sections.

Temperature: In a large pot with olive oil or butter, start with medium-high heat to sear the skin and cook the vegetables until just tender. Then lower heat to medium-low to simmer (covered) after adding liquid. At this point, if the oven is preferred, cook covered at 350 degrees F.

Time: The turkey will need to cook for about an hour, checking for doneness of the different sections. The breast will cook faster than the thighs and legs.

Tips: Liquids for braising can include water, broth, or stock, wine, spirits, beer, or any combination that works.

If using the stove and oven, the pot used should be oven-safe.

The turkey should be removed from the pan after searing to cook vegetables, then returned to the pan just before liquid is added.

When the turkey is done, the pan can be deglazed and the drippings used to make a gravy.



Recipes

Sausage and Wild Rice Stuffing

Stepping out of the traditional box can feel a little safer when some of the traditional flavors are retained. This stuffing is a tried-and-true option for those with gluten sensitivities, with a nod to a bread-based stuffing seasoning. Using fresh seasonal ingredients keeps this side dish as a main focus and maybe even the star of the show. Pairs extremely well with the "Turkey Giblet Gravy." We typically double the recipe to make sure we have extra for leftovers.

3 tablespoons butter or olive oil

1 large onion, diced

2-3 stalks celery, diced

2-3 carrots, diced

1/4 cup mushrooms, diced (optional)

1-2 zucchini, diced

2-5 cloves garlic, minced

1 tablespoon (chinese salted black beans, minced (can be found at most Asian markets)

3 tablespoons "Scarborough Fair" Poultry Herb Rub (see page 76)

1/2 cup cooked wild rice

2 1/2 cups cooked basmati rice (California eco-grown)

1 pound bulk Italian sausage (use your favorite — chicken, turkey, or pork), cooked and crumbled

Sea salt and pepper, to taste

In a large skillet, sauté onions in olive oil or butter for about 3-5 minutes. Add celery and carrots and cook until aromatic, about 2 minutes. Add mushrooms, zucchini, and garlic and cook for another 2-3 minutes.



Thanksgiving '19

Put cooked vegetables in a large bowl. Add all remaining ingredients to the bowl and mix until all is incorporated together.

Use a spoon or a gloved hand to stuff the turkey. Put remaining stuffing into a casserole dish and roast alongside the turkey for the last hour of cooking. All stuffing should be 165°F when done.

Save leftovers for other recipes.

Gluten-Free Turkey Giblet Gravy

Whether you struggle with making roux or need to stay away from gluten for other reasons, this is a great solution to the gravy problem. This gravy uses a homemade turkey stock that can easily be swapped out for chicken or beef.

1 tablespoon butter or olive oil

Giblets from 1 turkey (neck, liver, heart, and gizzards)

Turkey backbone (if spatchcocking)

6 cups water

optional herbs

Drippings from cooked turkey, plus 2-4 tablespoons of rice stuffing

Cornstarch (or cassava flour)

Salt and pepper, to taste

The day before or morning of:

In a 4-quart stockpot, melt butter over medium-high heat. When melted, add giblets and backbone. Brown on all sides.

Add 4 cups water and bring to a boil. If desired, add herbs of choice (bay, thyme, sage, rosemary, etc.)

Reduce heat and cover. Simmer for at least 6-8 hours, adding water as needed to keep giblets covered completely. Remove giblets from stock and remove bones. Finely chop all offal and meat from neck and back.

If made ahead, stock and chopped giblet meat can be refrigerated in tightly sealed containers in the refrigerator.

On the Feast Day:

After turkey is cooked, remove turkey from roasting pan and place pan over 2 burners at medium-low heat on the stove.

Add 1 cup of premade turkey stock and whisk well. In 1/2 cup of water or cooled stock, add 3 tablespoons of cornstarch or cassava



flour. Whisk until smooth and add this slurry slowly into pan, whisking continuously.

Add 1-2 cups of warm stock and stir until gravy begins to thicken. If it is too thick, add more stock. If it is too runny, make another slurry with water/stock and 2 tablespoons cassava/cornstarch, and add in small increments until gravy is desired thickness.

Stir in giblets and reserved rice stuffing to make a slightly chunky gravy.

Ideas for Leftovers

Leftovers are most people's favorite part of the turkey feast. Turkey sandwiches with a garlic aioli, cranberry relish, and a touch of gravy on toasted or grilled sourdough is a leftover staple that can't be beat. But why stop there? Here are some easy ideas to use up the leftovers without having the same meal every day for a week.

Turkey Pot Pie

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Make (or purchase) a pie crust for a double pie. Roll out to the size of a 9- by 13-inch baking dish or two 8- by 8-inch baking dishes. In a large skillet, add 1-2 cups chopped leftover turkey, 1 bag of frozen mixed vegetables, 1-2 cups Sausage Rice Stuffing and just enough gravy to thoroughly coat all ingredients. Cook, stirring, until heated through.

Pour ingredients evenly into single or both smaller baking dishes. Cover the top with the pie crust, sealing the crust to the edge of the dish with your fingers. Poke holes in the top with a fork to let the steam escape. Cook for about 45 minutes, or until crust is golden brown.

Turkey Enchiladas

Sauté an onion in butter or oil. Add chopped leftover turkey and cook until reheated. Grate your favorite cheese. Open a can or bottle of your favorite enchilada sauce. Warm a stack of small corn tortillas. In each tortilla, place a tablespoon of turkey and onion filling and a bit of cheese. Roll. Place in an 8- by 8- or 9- by 9-inch baking pan. Repeat until pan is full. Cover with enchilada sauce and then cheese. Cook at 350 degrees F until cheese is melted and golden.



Turkey and Rice Soup

In our family, the bones of the leftover bird immediately go into a Crock-Pot with enough water to cover and a simple bone broth is made to freeze for future recipes. To make an easy soup, in a large pot use 4 cups of that finished bone broth, add 1 cup of chopped leftover turkey, 1/4 cup leftover gravy, and 1 cup of leftover Sausage and Rice stuffing and heat until bubbling. Add salt and pepper as needed. Serve with grilled sourdough or leftover rolls.