

Home on the Range

Thanksgiving Dinner Made Easy

Most people prefer a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner: turkey with all the trimmings, mashed potatoes, corn pudding, cranberry relish, rolls, and pumpkin pie.

According to taste testers, the method most preferred in roasting turkey is the open pan roasting method, which creates a juicy, tender, golden brown, picture-perfect turkey.

- Place thawed or fresh turkey, breast up, on a flat rack in a shallow pan, 2 to 2½ inches deep.

- If unstuffed, insert oven-safe meat thermometer into the thickest part of the thigh. If stuffed, place the tip of the meat thermometer inside the stuffed cavity of turkey.

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

- Place in preheated 325-degree oven.

- When skin is a light golden color and the turkey about two-thirds done, shield the breast loosely with a tent of lightweight foil to prevent overcooking of the breast.

- Recommended roasting times are 3-3½ hours for 10-18 pounds; 3½-4 hours for 18-22 pounds; 4-4½ hours for 22-24 pounds; and 4½-5 hours for 24-30 pounds. Begin checking for doneness 30 minutes before end of estimated time. When the turkey is fully cooked, the leg will move easily when wiggled; juices will run clear, and 180 degrees will be reached on a meat thermometer.

If you are having a houseful of company, chances are you don't have enough room in the oven to bake turkey, stuffing, and corn souffle. Make the stuffing in the crock pot. You can put it in the crock pot several hours before dinner and forget about it until ready to serve — tastes great!

Did you know that lumpy mashed potatoes can't always be blamed on the cook? Some types of potatoes are better for mashing than others. Not all potatoes taste the same either.

The problem is that there are so many different varieties and most are lumped together when sold in grocery stores. Your best bet is to buy potatoes from farmers' markets and determine the taste and texture your family prefers and continue to buy that variety.

If you have additional questions, call the experts at the Turkey Talk-Line at 1-800-323-4848. Specially trained home economists will also answer calls on line at www.butterball.com — a great source for turkey tips and recipes.

Reynolds Turkey Tips Line is also available 24 hours a day. Call 1-800-745-4000. Leave your name and address for a collection of recipe brochures including Turkey Made Easy.

JEANETTE'S SPICED CRANBERRIES

- 1 package cranberries
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup raisins
- 2 cups sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ginger
- ¼ teaspoon mace
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon allspice

Put all ingredients in pot and cook until skins break and mixture is thick. After cooked, remove from stove and stir in 1 cup walnuts, which have been broken into pieces. Place in jars and refrigerate until ready to serve. Will keep indefinitely.

Eva Burrell
Glen Gardner, NJ

CORN SOUFFLE

- 2 cups cooked corn
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon sugar
 - 1 tablespoon corn starch
 - 2 cups milk
 - 3 or 4 eggs, beaten
 - 4 tablespoons butter, melted
 - 1 green pepper, cut in rings
- Combine corn, salt, and sugar. Dissolve corn starch in small amount of milk. Add with remaining milk to corn mixture. Add eggs and butter. Pour into buttered casserole and top with pepper rings if desired. Bake at 375 degrees for 45 minutes, or until set.

Elizabeth Young
Lancaster Co. Alternate Dairy Princess

SCALLOPED POTATOES

- 4 cups peeled, sliced potatoes
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 2 tablespoons parsley
 - 3 tablespoons flour
 - 2 cups milk
 - 3 tablespoons butter
- Mix together flour, salt, and parsley. Add milk and shake. Put in saucepan; add butter. Bring to boil, stirring until thickened. Remove from heat. Place half the potatoes in 2-quart casserole dish. Pour half the cooked mixture over potatoes. Add remaining potatoes and pour mixture over them. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

Amanda Martin
Lebanon Co. Dairy Princess



In American homes, Thanksgiving dinner is a time to remember the bounty available from field to table.

BUTTERSCOTCH PUDDING

- First layer:
- 1 cup flour
 - ½ cup butter
 - ½ cup chopped nuts
- Mix and press into 9x13-inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes. Cool.
- Second layer:
- 8-ounces cream cheese, softened
 - 1 cup powdered sugar
 - 1 cup whipped cream
- Beat together and spread over first layer.
- Third layer:
- 2 small 3-ounce packages instant butterscotch pudding
 - 3 cups milk
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Prepare according to package directions. Pour over second layer. Cover with whipped topping. Garnish with chopped nuts.

Kari Martin
Lancaster Co. Dairy Ambassador

FOUR CHEESE PUMPKIN APPETIZER

- 2 cups shredded Colby cheese, room temperature
 - 1 cup shredded provolone cheese, room temperature
 - 1 cup cottage cheese, softened
 - 1 teaspoon prepared mustard
 - 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
 - Paprika
 - Green bell pepper
 - Assorted crackers
- Combine Colby cheese, provolone cheese, cottage cheese, cream cheese, mustard, and Worcestershire sauce in work bowl food processor. Process until smooth. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate several hours for ease in shaping and to blend flavors. Shape into pumpkin and sprinkle with paprika. Use a piece of green bell pepper for the stem. Allow to stand at room temperature about 20 minutes prior to serving with assorted crackers. Yields 8 cups.

Liza Haas
Perry Co. Dairy Princess

AUNT MARION'S FRUIT SALAD DESSERT

- 11-ounce can mandarin oranges, drained
 - 20-ounce can pineapple chunks, drained
 - 16-ounce can sliced peaches, drained, cut into bite-sized pieces
 - 3 bananas, sliced
 - 2 unpeeled red apples, cut into bite-sized pieces
- Fruit Sauce:
- 3.4-ounce package instant vanilla pudding mix
 - 1 cup cold milk
 - ½ cup frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed and undiluted

¼ cup sour cream

In a large bowl, combine all fruit. Mix together gently; set aside. For sauce, combine all ingredients in another large bowl. Beat with wire whisk until smooth (mixture will thicken). Gently fold fruit into sauce. Cover and chill 3 to 4 hours before serving. Makes 10 servings (2 quarts).

If you prepare the day before, wait to add bananas and apples until the day you will be serving.

Jenna Martin
Lancaster Co. Dairy Ambassador
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Featured Recipe

You can make stuffing on the stovetop, buy frozen vegetable side dishes and grab last minute supermarket salads and relishes to fashion a holiday dinner. But bottom line, it's the turkey and gravy that are the centerpiece of the meal.

An easy way to guarantee easy clean-up and an evenly browned turkey is to use a cooking bag. Several varieties are available. Make sure you follow the directions on the package to ensure proper cooking.

Here is a recipe from Reynolds Kitchens, who by the way, are as close as your personal computer or telephone. They'll give you tips on defrosting your turkey, directions for getting it ready for roasting, and your choice of four kitchen-tested roasting methods.

Log onto their website at <http://www.reynoldskitchens.com> or phone 1-800-745-4000.

SIMPLY DELICIOUS HOLIDAY TURKEY

- 1 Reynolds oven bag, turkey size
 - 1 tablespoon flour
 - 2 stalks celery, sliced
 - 1 medium onion, sliced
 - 12-24-pound turkey, thawed
 - Vegetable oil
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Shake flour in oven bag, place in roasting pan at least 2-inches deep. Add vegetables to oven bag. Remove neck and giblets from turkey. Rinse turkey; pat dry. Lightly stuff with your favorite stuffing recipe, if desired. Brush turkey with oil. Place turkey in oven bag on top of vegetables.

Close oven bag with nylon tie; cut six ½-inch slits in top. Insert meat thermometer through slit in bag into thickest part of inner thigh, not touching bone.

Bake 2 to 2½ hours for a 12 to 16 pound turkey; 2½ to 3 hours for a 16 to 20 pound turkey; 3 to 3½ hours for a 20 to 24 pound turkey or until meat thermometer reaches 180 degrees. Add 30 minutes for stuffed turkey. Let stand in bag 15 minutes.

If turkey sticks to oven bag, gently loosen bag from turkey before opening oven bag. Makes 12 to 32 servings.

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for the topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date listed below.

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