

Making the Perfect Turkey Gravy

As the American diet has changed during the past few years, gravy has all but disappeared. Only on the most special of occasions do we allow ourselves the indulgence of this

hearty sauce made from the poultry drippings.

The turkey drippings, both the browned bits and fat, provide the color and flavor needed for good gravy. Salt and pepper are essen-

tial ingredients as they enrich the natural flavors. The quality of any gravy is enhanced by adding turkey stock, wine or apple cider.

The art of gravy making can be a challenge to those who only prepare the robust sauce on special holiday occasions. To produce a full flavored gravy, it is critical to cook the flour in about an equal portion of fat until the flour loses its raw taste. A rather common problem is the temptation to use too much flour, which decreases the flavor. Remember that gravy will continue to thicken after it has been removed from the heat. A good rule is to use between 1 and 2 tablespoons of flour for each cup of liquid and then give the mixture time to thicken.

If a shortage of turkey gravy is a common occurrence at your house, double the turkey gravy recipe by using melted butter and extra warm turkey or poultry stock.

If your gravy is lumpy, with a whisk or rotary beater, beat the gravy until smooth. If all other attempts fail, use a

food processor, strainer or blender. Reheat, stirring constantly; serve.

If slightly salty gravy is the problem, add several raw potato slices and cook until the potato slices are translucent. Remove the slices prior to serving. You could also try adding a few pinches of light brown sugar. Be sparing, or the gravy will become too sweet. If the oversalting is severe, the gravy must be repaired by increasing the quantity. Prepare another batch of gravy, omitting all salt. Blend the two batches together.

For gravy that is too light in color, add a teaspoon of instant coffee.

To thicken gravy, if time permits, allow the gravy to continue to simmer on the range top. If time does not allow, try blending

until dissolved 1 teaspoon per cup of liquid in cold water and mix into gravy. Continue to cook and stir to eliminate the cornstarch flavor.

Try the same process with a paste of flour and cold water or a tablespoon of Arrowroot, which can be served as soon as the gravy thickens due to arrowroot's lack of taste.

Mixing starch with cold water before adding it to a hot mixture prevents lumping.

If the gravy is too thick, slowly whisk in more broth until the desired thickness is reached.

For greasy/fatty gravy, the fat can be skimmed off the top or soaked up with a fresh bread slice. If more time allows, chill the gravy, skim off the fat and reheat the gravy until it bubbles.

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for 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. Be sure to include your name and address. Recipes should reach our office one week before the publishing date listed below.

Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522.

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2 - Holiday Cookies

9 - Snacks Using Chex, Other Cereals

16 - Holiday Entertaining

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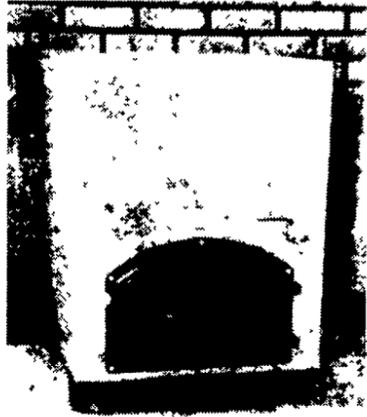
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Featured Recipe

Today's featured recipe includes a recipe and an idea to add a special touch to your holiday table. Kathryn Wagner, Mount Joy, suggests preparing special table favors for each guest.

Here are directions for duplicating what she writes is a "very pretty favor:" Insert white votive candles inside small clear glass votive candleholders. Using a glue gun, glue fresh glossy bay leaves around the holder. Tie a bow around the middle with gold florist's ribbon.

For many families, serving duck for Thanksgiving dinner is a tradition they wouldn't miss. Kathryn writes that a great side dish for a Thanksgiving duck dinner is this wild rice salad.

WILD RICE SALAD

- 2 cups wild rice, cooked
- 1/2 cup white rice, cooked
- 1/2 cup diced red peppers
- 1/2 cup chopped tomato
- 1/4 cup green peas, cooked
- 1/4 cup red onion, diced
- 1/4 cup green beans, cooked, cut in bite-sized pieces
- 4 tablespoons apple juice concentrate
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh tarragon, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Toss well. Serve chilled.

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