

Carving tips simplify holiday meals

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Carving the turkey need not be the ruin of your holiday meal celebration, according to Chef Hans Aeschbacher of Lawry's The Prime Rib restaurant in Chicago.

"Whether you serve turkey or prime rib," says Chef Hans, "if you prepare the meat properly and use a few easy-to-learn carving tips, your holiday meal will be the celebration it is meant to be," assures Hans.

Trained at Gewerbeschule, a gourmet cooking institute in Biel, Switzerland, Chef Hans has become a master carver.

Before you begin carving, Chef Hans offers these tips on preparation—tips which will make the actual carving easier:

- Fresh turkeys are best, but frozen ones are easier to find. Defrost the turkey in the refrigerator for two days. Season with butter, seasoned salt and pepper and baste with pan juices during roasting. Should the turkey brown too quickly, cover with a foil tent.

- A 15-pound turkey should cook 4½ hours at 325° F. Overcooked turkeys are nearly impossible to carve, so check yours by lifting up from under the wing—if the juices run clear, it's done.

- Cooked turkeys should stand five to 15 minutes before carving to give the juices time to settle and cool.

- You'll need a broadblade knife to cut the meat, a boning knife to cut through hard joints, and a long meat fork. Each tool must be sharp.

Now you're ready to begin the actual carving:

First, remove the drumstick and thigh by cutting straight down between the thigh and body (photo #1). Push the leg outward, and use the boning knife to cut the exposed joint between the thigh and backbone.

Second, slice the breast meat with long, smooth strokes. "Don't saw the meat," says Chef Hans. "You should carve as if you are playing the violin" (photo



2 SLICE THE BREAST MEAT using long, smooth strokes. "Don't saw the meat," says Lawry's Chef Hans, "carve it, as if you're playing a violin."



1 TO REMOVE the drumstick, cut straight down between the thigh and body with a sharp carving knife. Use a boning knife to cut the joint.

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