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Tips to turn out a terrific turkey

Any day may seem more like a holiday - and the holidays can seem festive indeed - if you make a meal of that terrific bird, the turkey.

Here are some tips on picking and preparing, palette-pleasing poultry, plus hints on dressing up Tom Turkey.

Buying the Bird

- If possible, get a fresh turkey. Be sure the breastbone and joints are flexible, signs that the bird is young.
- If you buy the turkey frozen, let it defrost for two to three days in the refrigerator so it will retain more of its juices.

Preparation Pointers

- Turkeys should be well-oiled, especially the breast, which can tend to dry out.
- Before roasting, rub the bird inside and out with seasoned salt.
- If the turkey's cavity is large, use the heel of a loaf of bread to hold in

the stuffing.

- Use dental floss to sew up the turkey after stuffing. It holds better than thread and won't tear the bird.

Cooking

- Roast a 10 to 13-pound turkey at 325F for approximately 20 minutes per pound.
- To test for doneness, see if the drumstick moves freely. You can also pierce the thickest part of the thigh. If the juice runs clear, it's done.

Preparing Stuffing - "Safe at the Plate"

- No matter what stuffing recipe you prepare, it's important to prepare it safely. Warm, moist stuffing in the closed cavity of a turkey is a nurturing environment for bacteria. Here are a few precautions to take when roasting stuffed poultry:
- Do not premix the stuffing. If you wish to prepare ahead, keep the pre-

measured ingredients separate.

- Pack stuffing loosely in the cavity; it will expand during cooking.
- Temperature and timing are important: the stuffing must be cool before it is placed in the bird, and the bird must be stuffed just before going into the oven.
- Use a meat thermometer to check the doneness of the bird and the stuffing. The meat should reach 185F and the stuffing should reach 165F.

- Spoon all the stuffing into a serving bowl as soon as the bird is out of the oven.

Corn Pudding Recipe

This recipe is a welcome alternative to the traditional buttered corn served at Thanksgiving.

Combine one 12-oz. can whole kernel corn, two 17-oz. cans cream-style corn and five lightly beaten eggs. Add mixture of one half cup sugar, four tablespoons corn starch, one and a half teaspoons seasoned salt, half a teaspoon dry mustard and one teaspoon instant minced onion. Stir in half cup each milk and melted butter. Pour into greased three-quart casserole. Bake in 400F oven one hour, stirring once.

Colorful Cornbread Recipe

Combine one eight and a half-oz. box cornbread mix, one 16-oz. can drained mixed vegetables, one cup shredded cheddar cheese, half cup chopped onion, one third cup milk and one slightly beaten egg.

Spoon into lightly greased eight by eight-inch pan. Bake at 400F for 25 minutes. Cool five minutes before cutting (left-over chopped, cooked ham or sausage can be added). Makes six to eight servings.

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