

PWOC LADIES DEMONSTRATE HOLIDAY FOOD PREPARATION

HOW TO MAKE A PIE WITH CLAUDIA KLEIN

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=oLtK4145pFo>

HOW TO MAKE CHALLAH BREAD WITH LAURA GROSSGLAUSER

<https://youtu.be/2LEMuE9hOlo>

TIPS FOR HIGH ALTITUDE BAKING:

<https://www.kingarthurbaking.com/learn/resources/high-altitude-baking>

THANK YOU

Fort Carson Protestant Women of the Chapel (PWOC)

Eva Hailbronner: Consultant



HOW TO for the Holidays

SPONSORED BY FORT CARSON
RELIGIOUS SUPPORT.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

HOW TO PLAN FOR THE MEAL

- What to serve
- Equipment needed
- Wine Pairings

HOW TO SHOP FOR THE MEAL

- Local resources
- Pounds of food per person

SCHEDULE FOR EVENT

- Holiday Hotlines
- How to set a table
- When to thaw / prepare food

ETIQUETTE

- RSVPing
- Guests and food
- Clean-up help

PRAYERS

RECIPES

- Appetizers
- Bread
- Desserts
- Sides

Desserts:

Pumpkin Cake Roll

- 3/4 c flour
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ginger
- 1 c sugar
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 3 eggs
- 2/3 c canned pumpkin

FILLING:

- 4 TBSP butter
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 2-3 oz. cream cheese

Sift together flour, baking powder, cinnamon and ginger, set aside. Beat eggs 5 minutes with electric mixer until thick. Gradually beat in 1 c. sugar. Stir in pumpkin and lemon juice. Fold dry ingredients into pumpkin mix. Spread in greased and floured 15"x13" jelly roll pan (a cookie sheet with sides). Preheat oven to 375 degrees and bake 15 minutes. Loosen edges and turn out immediately onto towel sprinkled with powdered sugar. Roll up and cool. Unroll and spread on filling. Roll up and chill. Will keep several days in refrigerator. Freezes well.

Pumpkin Pie Cake

- 4 eggs
- 1 1/2 c sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 can evaporated milk
- 2 sticks butter
- 1 (16 oz) can pumpkin
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 yellow cake mix
- 1 c nuts, chopped (optional)

Mix together eggs, pumpkin, sugar, cinnamon, salt and milk. Put into 9"x13" baking dish. Sprinkle cake mix on top. Drip melted butter over cake mix. Sprinkle with nuts. Bake at 350 degrees for 75 minutes.



RECIPES

Bread:

Challah Bread

1 c lukewarm water
 2 tsp active dry or instant yeast
 4 to 4 1/2 c flour
 1/4 c granulated sugar
 2 tsp salt
 2 lrg eggs
 1 lrg egg yolk (reserve the white for egg wash)
 1/4 c neutral-flavored vegetable oil, such as canola

Place the water in small bowl, sprinkle with the yeast and a healthy pinch of sugar, stir to combine. Let stand until you see a thin, frothy layer across the top. Place 4 c flour and the sugar and salt in the bowl of mixer and whisk. Make a well in the center of the flour and add the eggs, egg yolk and oil. Whisk to form a slurry, pulling a little flour from the sides of the bowl. Pour the yeast mixture over the egg slurry. Mix. Knead in mixer for 60-80 minutes with dough hook or by hand on floured board for 10 minutes. Place dough in oiled bowl, cover and let rise until doubled. Divide dough into 3 or 6 equal pieces. Roll each piece into along rope about 16". Gather ropes and squeeze together at the top, braid the ropes and squeeze at bottom. Place braided loaf on parchment-lined baking sheet, cover with clean kitchen towel and let rise one hour. 20 minutes before baking, arrange oven rack to the middle and heat oven to 350 degrees. Whisk the reserved egg white with 1 TBSP water and brush onto loaf. Bake, rotating the baking sheet halfway until the challah is deeply browned, 30-35 minutes.

Desserts:

Santa's Whiskers Cookies

1 c butter, softened
 2 TBSP milk
 1 1/2 c flour
 1/2 c finely chopped pecans (optional)
 1 c sugar
 1 tsp vanilla or rum
 3/4 c finely chopped red candied cherries (find in produce section of grocery store)
 3/4 c flaked coconut

Cream butter and sugar. Blend in vanilla and milk. Stir in flour, cherries and pecans. Form into two, 8" rolls. Roll in flaked coconut to coat outside. Wrap in waxed paper. Chill thoroughly. Cut into 1/4" slices. Place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees until edges are golden. Makes 60.

HOW TO PLAN FOR THE MEAL

What to serve:

Each family will have unique and shared traditions. Some traditional American holiday foods include:

Appetizers

Turkey / Ham / Lamb

Bread

Macaroni and cheese / sweet potatoes / collard greens / green beans

Pie / Cookies /

Equipment Needed:

Some basic equipment needed includes:

Rolling pin

Measuring cups

Measuring spoons

Mixing bowls / Electric Mixer

Potato Masher

Roasting pans (disposable is ok)

Aluminum foil

Bags and dishes for leftovers

Wine Pairings:



	Sauvignon Blanc	Chardonnay	Torrontés	Pinot Noir	Malbec	Merlot	Cabernet Sauvignon	Zinfandel
Serving Temp	46-48°	50-52°	48-50°	59-61°	60-62°	60-62°	62-64°	60-63°
Cheese / Nuts	teta chèvre pine nuts	asiago havarti almonds	goat cheese mozzarella toasted nuts	goat cheese brie walnuts	asiago romano gouda	parmesan romano chestnuts	cheddar gorgonzola walnuts	ripe brie aged cheese
Meat / Fowl	chicken turkey	veal chicken pork loin	smoked meats mozzarella chorizo	lamb sausage filet mignon roasted chicken	hamburgers duck barbecued pork ribs	grilled meats steak	venison ribeye beef stew	pork spicy sausage beef duck
Seafood	sole oysters scallops	halibut shrimp crab	sushi seabass grilled mahi mahi	orange roughy tuna	grilled halibut shark swordfish	grilled swordfish tuna	grilled tuna	cioppino blackened fish
Veggie / Fruit	citrus green apples asparagus	potato apple squash mango	mango pineapple mixed green salad	mushrooms dried fruit figs strawberries	sautéed spinach baked potatoes blueberries	caramelized onions tomatoes plums	black cherries broccoli tomatoes	cranberries grilled peppers eggplant
Herb / Spice	chives tarragon cilantro	rosemary ginger	marjoram basil garlic	nutmeg cinnamon clove	rosemary black pepper	mint rosemary juniper	rosemary juniper lavender	pepper nutmeg
Sauces	citrus light	sweet bbq spicy chutney	white asian peanut	mushroom light-medium red sauce	cajun barbecue mole sauce	bolognese béarnaise	brown tomato	spicy cajun salsa
Desserts	sorbet key lime pie	banana bread vanilla pudding	cheesecake tiramisu	crème brûlée white chocolate	banana pudding chocolate dulce de leche	dark chocolate berries fondue	bittersweet chocolate espresso gelato	spice cake gingerbread carrot cake

HOW TO SHOP FOR THE MEAL

Local Resources

- Gluten-free bakery: Outside The Breadbox
2027 W. Colorado Avenue
719-633-3434
www.outsidethebreadbox.com
** closed Sundays and Mondays*
- Organic Supplies: Sprouts
Natural Grocers
Whole Foods
- Culture Specific Food Markets:
Asian Pacific Market
615 Wooten Road #160
719-573-7500
- Luna Market (Latino)
280 S. Academy Blvd
719-597-3192
- Adam's International Market (Indian)
1822 Dominion Way
719-598-9991
- Grocery Stores: Safeway
Kingsooper
Walmart
Cheapies Grocery Outlet

How much to make per person

Vegetables: 1/2—3/4 cup

Rolls: 1.5

Appetizers: 4-6 if a meal follows or 6-8 if followed by a late meal

Soup as a side: 1 quart serves 6.

Soup as a main dish: 1 quart serves 2

Turkey: 1.25 pounds (including bones)

Mac N' Cheese / Sides: 1 cup

RECIPES

Sides:

Collard Greens

- 1 TBSP olive oil
- 3 slices bacon
- 1 lrg onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 3 c. chicken broth
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes
- 1 pound fresh collard greens, cut into 2" pieces

Heat oil in lrg pot over medium-high heat. Add bacon and cook until crisp. Remove bacon from pan, crumble and return to the pan. Add onion, and cook until tender, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook until just fragrant. Add collard greens, and fry until they start to wilt. Pour in chicken broth and season with salt, pepper and red pepper flakes. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 45 minutes or until greens are tender.

Macaroni and Cheese

- 2 TBSP butter
- 1/4 c finely chopped onion
- 2 TBSP flour
- 2 c milk
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard
- 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 (8 oz) pkg elbow macaroni
- 2 c shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 (8 oz) pkg processed American cheese, cut into strips (Velveeta)

Melt butter in medium saucepan over medium heat. Saute onion for 2 minutes. Stir in flour and cook 1 minute, stirring constantly. Stir in milk, salt, mustard and pepper; cook, stirring frequently until mixture boils and thickens. In separate pot, boil macaroni in lightly salted water and cook for 8-10 minutes or until al dente; drain. To the milk mixture, add the cheddar and American cheeses, stir until cheese melts. Combine macaroni and cheese sauce in 2 quart baking dish, mix well. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until hot and bubbly.

RECIPES

Sides:

Green Bean Casserole

1 can (10 1/2 oz) cream of mushroom soup
1/2 c milk
1 tsp soy sauce
1 dash black pepper
4 c cooked cut green beans
1 1/3 c French fried onions

Stir the soup, milk, soy sauce, black pepper, beans and 2/3 onions into a 1 1/2 quart casserole dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes or until the bean mixture is hot and bubbling. Stir the bean mixture. Sprinkle with the remaining onions. Bake for 5 minutes more or until the onions are golden brown.

Sweet Potatoes

1/2 stick (4 TBSP) butter, melted
3-4 lrg sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
1/2 c milk
1/4 c brown sugar, packed
1 tsp vanilla or vanilla extract
1/2 tsp salt
2 lrg eggs

Topping:

1/2 c flour
1/2 c brown sugar, packed
1/2 stick (4 TBSP) butter, melted
1/4 tsp salt
3/4 c chopped pecans

Add sweet potatoes to large pot of salted water. Bring to boil over high heat, then lower the heat to simmer and cook until the potatoes are very tender (15-20 minutes). Drain and cool. Mash the sweet potatoes. Butter the 2 quart baking dish. Whisk together the butter, mashed potatoes, milk, brown sugar, vanilla, salt and eggs in a large bowl. Transfer to baking dish. Stir together all topping ingredients (will be clumps). Spread the topping on the potato mixture. Bake at 350 degrees until mostly set in the center and golden on top, 25-30 minutes.

SCHEDULE FOR EVENT

Holiday Hotlines

Betty Crocker: 888-275-2388
Butterball Turkey Talk Line: 800-288-8372
Center for poison control: 800-222-1222
FDA Center for Food Safety: 888-723-3366
Fleischmann's Yeast: 800-777-4959
Nestle Baking: 800-637-8537
Ocean Spray: 800-662-3262
Reynolds Kitchen Tips Line: 800-745-4000
USDA Meat and Poultry: 800-535-4555

How to set a table



- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1 Salad Fork | 9 Place Card | 17 Tea Spoon |
| 2 Fish Fork | 10 Salad Plate | 18 Seafood Fork |
| 3 Dinner Fork | 11 Soup Bowl | 19 Water Goblet |
| 4 Napkin | 12 Dinner Plate | 20 Champagne Flute |
| 5 Butter Knife | 13 Salad Knife | 21 Red Wine Glass |
| 6 Bread Plate | 14 Meat Knife | 22 White Wine Glass |
| 7 Dessert Spoon | 15 Fish Knife | 23 Sherry Glass |
| 8 Dessert Fork | 16 Soup Spoon | |

SCHEDULE FOR EVENT

When to thaw / prepare food

Ways to Thaw a Frozen Turkey

Frozen Whole Turkeys and Frozen Whole Turkey Breasts need to be thawed before cooking. For the best results, follow one of these thawing methods:

Refrigerator Thawing

- Thaw turkey breast side up, in an unopened wrapper on a tray in the fridge (40 degrees F or below).
- Allow at least 1 day of thawing for every 4 lbs of turkey.
- Keep turkey in original wrapper and place on tray.
Use turkey within 4 days after thawing.

Cold Water Thawing

- Thaw turkey breast side down, in an unopened wrapper, with enough cold water to cover your turkey completely.
- Change water every 30 minutes and if turkey cannot be completely covered, rotate every 30 minutes to keep the turkey chilled.

Estimate a minimum thawing time of 30 minutes per lb of turkey.

***A thawed turkey can be kept in the refrigerator up to 4 days before cooking.

Soup

Whip up a big batch of your favorite and freeze it, then take it out of the freezer the morning of Thanksgiving so it's ready to be reheated on the stove just before serving.

Gravy

Can be made and frozen 1 to 2 weeks before your guests arrive. If you want to use parts from the actual bird to boost flavor, whip up the gravy two days ahead and refrigerate it, then reheat in a saucepan until hot so it's ready for pouring over the sliced turkey.

Turkey

A 20-pound turkey can take up to five days to thaw in the fridge—budget one day for every 4 pounds—and if you're using a brine, make sure the bird has 12 hours to marinate.

Roasting an unstuffed bird can take 2 to 4 hours, depending on the size. Check that an instant-read thermometer reads 165 degrees F for the breast meat and 170 to 175 degrees F for the thick part of the thigh before removing it from the oven. Then tent it with foil and let it rest for at least 30 minutes before slicing—this ensure that no one will be complaining about a dry bird.

RECIPES

Appetizers

Wrappers

- 6 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 c sour cream
- 3 tsp Mrs. Dash
- 1 1/2 oz sliced beef, diced
- 36 wonton wrappers
- 2 TBSP parmesan cheese, fresh, not powdered
- 1/2 tsp garlic salt
- 1/8 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 c Swiss cheese, shredded

Cream together cream cheese and spices. Add beef. Add cheese.

- Use greased mini-muffin pan
- Allow plenty of time
- Wontons should be sealed and kept in refrigerator. Only bring out about 10 at a time
because they dry fast.
- Use 1/2 tsp mixture in each Wonton
- Use wet fingers to pinch and twist shut each Wonton
- Need ice pick or some sort of long, narrow circular object to press wonton into
muffin pan.

Spinach and Cheese Spirals

- 1 TBSP olive oil
- 6 oz bagged baby spinach
- Salt to taste
- 1/2 c shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 c cheddar cheese
- 6 TBSP ranch dressing
- 1 pkg (8 oz) refrigerated crescent rolls

In lrg skillet, warm oil over medium heat. Add spinach and toss until wilted. Season to taste with salt. Remove spinach to cutting board, chop and cool. In medium bowl mix cheese, dressing and cooked spinach. Unroll crescent roll dough and separate into four rectangles. Firmly press perforations to seal the dough. Spread spinach mixture evenly over the four rectangles. Starting with the short side, roll up each rectangle, cut into six slices and arrange on parchment-lined cookie sheet. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes or until golden brown.

RECIPES

Appetizers

Texas Sushi

1 jar mild pickled okra
Ham lunch meat
Whipped cream cheese
Toothpicks

Spread thin layer of cream cheese on a slice of ham, set okra on top and roll up. Hold together with toothpick.

Meat Cheeseball

1 (8 oz) pkg cream cheese
2 c. ground cooked ham or corned beef
1 tsp. minced onion (dried or fresh)
1/4 c. mayonnaise (miracle whip is ok also)
2 TBSP parsley, chopped
1/4 tsp dry mustard

Beat cream cheese and mayonnaise until smooth. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cover chill several hours. Form into ball. Serve with crackers.

Holiday Cheeseball

4 c. Mexican-blend shredded cheese
10 scallions, chopped (green onions)
1/3 c. real mayonnaise
Raspberry preserves

Mix together all ingredients except preserves. Refrigerate at least 6 hours. Heat preserves and pour over top to serve.



Stuffing

Store-bought stuffing mix comes together in no time, but home-made stuffing recipes take a bit of forethought. Cube the bread and set it out to stale two days ahead of Thanksgiving, or bake the cornbread and leave it on the counter for cornbread stuffing. If you'll be serving stuffing on the side, assemble it one day ahead and refrigerate until you're ready to bake (at the same time as the turkey, or once the turkey is resting). In-turkey stuffing must be prepped first thing on Thanksgiving morning, then stuffed into the turkey cavity and cooked along with the bird.

Casseroles

Whether your family demands green bean casserole or scalloped potatoes alongside their turkey, these dishes can be prepped and assembled two whole days before the big event. Make sure to cover and refrigerate them, then stick the dish in the hot oven once you've taken the turkey out to rest. They'll be golden and bubbly just in time to eat.

Salads & Cold Sides

No-bake dishes are they key to a spacious oven. Wash and prep lettuce and vegetables for autumn salads two days ahead for easy assembly on Thanksgiving morning—wait to dress it until serving. While you're at it, chop up all the herbs you'll need for garnishes and other recipes. The most clever hosts could even recruit relatives to handle the cold sides and salads to complement your mains, guaranteeing that no one screws up your oven rotation.

Cranberry Sauce

Throw together a quick cranberry sauce or relish two days ahead and refrigerate it 'til dinnertime—you'll never look back at the jellied stuff from a can again.

Mashed Potatoes

If you're really on top of your game, regular and sweet potatoes can be peeled the day before and stored, covered in cold water, in the fridge. Then all you'll need to do it boil and mash them on the stovetop while the turkey is resting—don't forget plenty of butter, and try adding mix-ins for the best mashed potatoes your guests have ever tasted.

Desserts

Baking is way too time-consuming to bother with when your extended family is around. Make things easier on yourself by making pie dough a week before, then portion it into disks and freeze. Two days before, move the dough to the fridge to defrost so you can bake up a storm on Thanksgiving Eve. Custard and pumpkin pies can be refrigerated overnight, while pecan and apple pies do best when kept at room temperature. Anything that needs reheating can get popped in the oven while the turkey is resting, or while the dinner table is being cleared for dessert.

delish

THE ULTIMATE THANKSGIVING PREP TIMELINE

1 WEEK BEFORE

Make & freeze soup
Make & freeze gravy
Make pie dough and freeze into discs

5 DAYS BEFORE

Start thawing turkey (if 20 lbs or larger) Budget
1 day of thawing for every 4 lbs of turkey!

2 DAYS BEFORE

Cube bread for stuffing
Prepare & refrigerate casseroles
Chop vegetables for salad and sides
Prepare & refrigerate cranberry sauce

1 DAYS BEFORE

Assemble stuffing & refrigerate
Peel potatoes & cover in cold water; refrigerate
Bake pies

THANKSGIVING

Boil and mash potatoes
Roast turkey
Heat sides, casseroles, soup, gravy
Assemble salad



HOLIDAY PRAYER: “Give us, O God, the vision which can see thy love in the world in spite of human failure. Give us the faith to trust the goodness in spite of our ignorance and weakness. Give us the knowledge that we may continue to pray with understanding hearts, and show us what each one of us can do to set forth the coming of the day of universal peace. Amen.” — Frank Borman

CHRISTMAS EVE DINNER PRAYER: “Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.” — Robert Louis Stevenson

CHRISTMAS TREE BLESSING: Holy Creator of Trees, Bless with your abundant grace this our Christmas tree as a symbol of joy. May its ever-green branches be a sign of your never-fading promises. May its colorful lights and ornaments call us to decorate with love our home and our world. May the gifts that surround this tree be symbols of the gifts we have received from the Tree of Christ's Cross. Holy Christmas tree within our home, may Joy and Peace come and nest in your branches and in our hearts. Amen.

MILITARY FAMILY PRAYER: Dear Lord, Our hearts are filled with gratitude for the men and women who serve our country now and in the past, and for the sacrifices their families make so that we can all enjoy the blessing of freedom. We praise you for calling them to help protect us, and for giving them the courage and ability to do their jobs well. Guide their choices and their actions, Lord. Help them to see you working in their daily lives, whether in the field, at home, or abroad. Surround them with your mighty angels; protect them in your mercy; cover them with your grace. Guard their hearts while they are far from loved ones, and bless them with moments to cherish when they are together. Hold these families close, Lord. May they look to You for the strength and peace that only You can give. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.

PRAYERS

PRAYER FOR THANKSGIVING: Loving God, We turn our hearts to you on this day for giving thanks, mindful of your many gifts. For each one, we are grateful. For each one, we are blessed. For each one we are opened to the abundance of your love. May this Thanksgiving Day offer a reminder to be generous with others, as you are with us. We praise you. We rejoice in you. We give you thanks. Amen.

THANKFUL PRAYER: We thank you, Lord for all you give; The good we eat, the lives we live. And to our loved ones far away, please send your blessings, Lord we pray. And help us all to live our days with thankful hearts and loving ways. Amen.

PRAYER FOR HOME: Lord, May our home be a place of: **H**ealing words (Proverbs 12:18b), **O**verflowing hope, peace and joy (Romans 15:13), **M**ercy, love and justice (Micah 6:8) and **E**ncouragement (Thessalonians 5:11)

PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE: “May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.” — Ray Pritchard

CHRISTMAS DAY PRAYER: “Almighty God, who has poured upon us the new light of your Incarnate Word; Grant that the same light enkindled in our hearts may shine forth in our lives through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” — 1979 Book of Common Prayer

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS PRAYER: May the blessing of joy abide within you; May the blessing of peace rest upon you; May the blessing of love flow out through you; May all the blessings of the Lord be yours at Christmas and in the new year.

CHRISTMAS PRAYER: “But the Bethlehem star may lead me to the sight of Him Who freed me from the self that I have been. Make me pure, Lord: Thou art Holy; Make me meek, Lord: Thou wert lowly; Now beginning, and always, now begin, on Christmas day.” — Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J.

COOKING GUIDE

tsp = teaspoon
TBSP = tablespoon
c = cup
pkg = package

HELPFUL TIPS

1. Instant mashed potatoes help thicken soups and stews.
2. It is easier to slice raw meat thinly if it is partially frozen.
3. Do not cover fried chicken after it is cooked because the coating becomes soggy.
4. Add a couple drops on food coloring to the water when boiling eggs so you can't mix them up with raw eggs when storing in the refrigerator.
5. Fresh lemon, lemon balm and fresh mint will remove onion smell from your hands.
6. Always wear gloves when chopping peppers.
7. Add a TBSP of raw rice to your salt shaker to prevent clumps.
8. Add a slice of store bought bread to hard brown sugar and it will be soft in 24 hours.
9. Soups and quick breads taste better the next day.
10. Add a tsp of baking soda to the water when you make a pitcher of tea for a less bitter taste.
11. Add baking soda to the water when boiling eggs to help the shells come off easier.
12. Soak skewers in water for 30 minutes before grilling to prevent burning them.
13. Never pour grease down the drain. Put it into a bowl lined with foil and discard when cooled.
14. Arrowroot and cornstarch can be used as thickeners instead of flour.
15. Vanilla extract can be used in place of pure vanilla.
16. Use high-altitude flour when baking in Colorado.
17. Save the ham bone to make ham and bean soup.
18. Save the turkey bones to make turkey soup.

KITCHEN CONVERSIONS



How to Thaw and Cook a Turkey

Claudia Klein

For most people, this one part of cooking the holiday meal might seem the most daunting, but it really isn't. So, the first step, thawing the turkey. Okay, so normally I don't thaw my turkey because I don't freeze it. I typically buy my turkey about 3 days before the big meal preparation and just stick it in the fridge till it's ready to be cooked. But if for some reason you do have a turkey in the freezer that needs to be thawed, put it in your fridge 2 days before you're going to cook it. Check on it the day before to see how frozen it still is, and if it's still pretty frozen, let it thaw in the kitchen sink all day and night. If it thawed pretty well in the fridge, stick it in your kitchen sink the night before you're going to cook it.

Now, for the preparing it to be cooked. Have you ever wondered what the secret is to juicy turkey? I'm about to tell you. But first, check the inside of the turkey and take everything out of it. There's typically a neck (keep this for making a gravy), and a few other things like maybe a gravy making packet and some other innards. Next, you can stuff your turkey with whatever appeals to you. I like to put a whole apple and a whole onion, peeled, inside mine. You can also make a meat stuffing, but know that this will take it longer to bake in the oven. A meat stuffing consists of ground beef and whatever seasonings appeal to you. Here's a quick recipe if you're at a loss:

1 lb ground beef
½ loaf old bread
1 onion, chopped
2 celery stalks with leaves, chopped
½ c chopped mushrooms (optional)
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 Tbsp fresh parsley
½ c shredded parmesan cheese
1 egg

Salt and pepper to taste
Brown ground beef on stove. Tear bread into rough chunks, and place into a bowl; soak bread in water until moistened, and squeeze the water out of the bread. Crumble the wet bread into the bowl with the ground beef. Mix in the onion, celery, mushrooms, garlic, parsley, parmesan cheese, and egg until thoroughly combined. Season with salt and pepper. Stuff the mixture in the turkey and cook according to instructions on the turkey packaging.

I also like to season the outside of my bird. I typically do sage, parsley, thyme, salt and pepper. Just coat the turkey with a nice layer of each of those seasonings and you should be good.

ETIQUETTE

TABLE MANNERS:

1. Come to the table with hands and face clean. Not only does this show respect for the person who prepared the meal as well as others at the dinner table, but it is also an important healthy hygiene habit.
2. Always ask if you can help. Whether at home or someone else's house, always ask if you can help do anything to get ready for dinner.
3. If setting the table, remember BMW. Bread and milk go on the left and water on the right. Remember where silverware goes by the number of letters in the words "left" and "right,." The fork goes on the left and has four letters. The knife goes on the right and has five letters.
4. Watch the host to see when you should unfold your napkin. When the host puts their napkin on their lap, that's the signal for you to put your napkin on yours.
5. Wait until everyone is served before eating.
6. Never, ever chew with your mouth open. Chewing with your mouth closed and not talking when your mouth is full are two cardinal rules of good table manners.
7. Never stuff your mouth. Take small bites and never wolf down food.
8. Do not interrupt when someone else is talking.
9. Never reach to get something. Create the habit of asking table mates to pass something they need.
10. Put the napkin on the chair, not the table. Put your napkin on the chair if you leave the table briefly. It should never go on your plate or the table.
11. Always push your chair in when finished.
12. Always pick up your plate and say thank you.

ETIQUETTE

RSVP: This little code has been around for a long time and it tells you that your host wants to know if you will attend. Reply promptly, within a day or two of receiving an invitation, and by the RSVP deadline at the latest, if one is given.

WHEN TO START EATING: At a small table of only two to four people, wait until everyone else has been served before starting to eat. At a formal or business meal, you should either wait until everyone is served to start or begin when the host asks you to.

CLEAN-UP: Take cues from your hosts on how much they are hoping to accomplish that evening (tired souls do, sometimes, just prefer to retire and deal with the wreck tomorrow). But if they begin to start cleaning up, this is the time to chime in with offers of assistance. Without making a fuss, jumping up to clear the table, load the dishwasher, scrub pans, or dry dishes is perfectly appropriate.

THANK-YOU: Be specific about what you are thanking the person for. You don't want to simply say, "Thank you for the gift." That may give the impression that you can't remember what the person gave you. Even if you didn't care for the gift, you should send a thank you note. State how you will use or have used the gift or service.

HOSTESS GIFT: Dinner party guests usually bring a hostess gift unless they are close friends who dine together frequently. Gift possibilities include wine, Champagne, flowers (preferably in a vase), a potted plant, chocolates, specialty food items such as jams and jellies or other condiments, fancy nuts, olives, olive oil or vinegars, or items for the house, such as cocktail napkins, guest soaps and lotions, a picture frame, or a scented candle. A CD or book is also appropriate if you know your host's taste.

LEFTOVERS: You're a guest in your host's home and anything you contributed to the party is tantamount to a gift. Unless the host decides not to preserve the remainder of your contribution and suggests that you take your leftovers home, don't expect to return with your leftovers. Just return with your empty dish.

Okay, so whatever you decide to stuff your turkey with, it's now stuffed and your ready to cook it, right? Well here's where the secret to juicy turkey comes in. You're going to cook your turkey in a turkey bag. You can find turkey bags with the Ziploc bags in the grocery store. So, once your bird is stuffed, plop that sucker into your turkey bag and follow the instructions on the turkey bag box. Don't forget to punch those holes in the turkey bag to let out the air.

Now comes the baking. On most turkey packaging it tells you what temperature to bake the turkey at and how many minutes to cook it per pound of turkey. It's typically 20 minutes per pound. So, do your cooking calculations the day before so you start it with plenty of time to spare for the big meal. I remember Thanksgivings at my Grandma's house we bought at least a 15 pound bird and had to start cooking at 6 in the morning or earlier for it to be ready by 12 or 1. And if you do decide to try the meat stuffing, it'll take about 15-20 minutes longer than the cooking instructions say.

There are several ways to tell if your turkey is done. The best one is to use a meat thermometer. When the thermometer reads 165 it's done. They also have pop up timers. You stick it in the turkey and when it's done it pops up. I've heard these are really inaccurate though and tend to lead to overcooking your bird. Then there's the good old fashioned way of slicing into the meatiest part of the thigh and seeing if there's any pink. But typically, the cooking instructions for how long to bake it per pound are pretty accurate.

So once it's done, cut open the turkey bag and eat it when you're ready. Happy Holidays!

