

Kosher Deli Recipes

Roast Turkey with Basic Stuffing



Roast Turkey is a crowd-pleasing dish that is a traditional favourite at family dinners and holiday meals. This turkey recipe is simple and straightforward. You can substitute herbs and spices to adapt the recipe to your own tastes.

What you cannot afford to do is to ignore the safety issues associated with the preparation and cooking of Roast Turkey. You must handle the meat with clean hands, utensils and on a clean working surface. Most of all, defrost the turkey in the refrigerator, not at room temperature. As noted below, stuffing should be inserted and removed from the turkey just before it is cooked and right after it is removed from the oven, to avoid contamination.

Ingredients for Roast Turkey:

- 1 turkey, any size (this recipe will cover a 12 lb. turkey)
- 6 tbsp. Oil
- 2 tsp. Salt
- 1 tsp. Pepper
- 2 tsp. Paprika
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (or substitute garlic powder)
- 2 tsp. dried herbs (oregano, sage, thyme)
- 1 cup chicken broth or water to add to pan

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.

First, make sure to remove neck and giblets from cavity of turkey. In a small bowl, mix together oil, salt, pepper, paprika, onion powder, garlic and herbs. Using your washed hands or a brush, apply oil mixture all over the outside and interior of turkey. Be thorough and try to brush some of the mixture under the skin of the turkey.

At this point, you can insert a prepared stuffing*, leave the turkey unstuffed or simply insert cut-up vegetables** into the cavity. You may also decide to cook the stuffing in the oven in a separate casserole dish. Tie legs together with string and secure wings close to body so that they do not stick out and overcook. Place seasoned turkey into an uncovered roasting pan. Add 1 cup chicken broth or water to the pan.

Place uncovered turkey in oven and baste every 15 minutes during the first hour of cooking. After that, every 20 minutes should be enough. A 12 lb. turkey will take approx. 3 1/2 to 4 hours to cook, if stuffed. If unstuffed, subtract a half hour.

To test doneness of roast turkey, insert a meat thermometer into a thick, meaty part of the breast or thigh - it should read 180 degrees F. Test the leg - if it is easy to move around, the turkey is done. Of course, juices should run clear, not pink, when the turkey is cooked. Note that stuffing temperature should read at least 165 degrees F.

Remove from oven and let the turkey rest for 20-30 minutes before slicing. Apply a loose foil tent over the top of the turkey during this time. You have a choice to make: deglaze juices with white wine or chicken broth -or- simply remove the tasty juices from the roasting pan and serve with sliced turkey plus cranberry sauce, if desired.

Enjoy your Roast Turkey dinner!

Note: Stuffing should not remain in turkey once it is cooked. Remove it and serve in a separate dish or refrigerate promptly. In addition, stuffing should

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not sit inside the turkey for a long period before cooking - there is a chance of contamination. Stuff and cook the turkey promptly.

***BASIC STUFFING for a 12 lb. roast turkey:**

- 1/3 cup oil or non-dairy margarine
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 12 slices of lightly toasted or stale challah or white bread, torn or crumbled by hand into small pieces
- 2 tbsp. dried parsley
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. onion powder
- 1/4 tsp. pepper

• **Chicken broth, if necessary**

In a skillet, heat margarine on medium heat and lightly saute onions and celery for 5 minutes. In a bowl, combine the torn pieces of bread and remaining seasonings. Add the onion/celery mixture to the bowl and blend thoroughly. If mixture is very dry, add 1/4 cup of chicken broth and blend well. Taste stuffing mixture to see if additional salt or other seasonings are required. Insert spoonfuls of stuffing into the turkey before you tie the legs together.

****Cut up a mixture of chopped celery, carrots, onions, fresh herbs such as parsley, sage, thyme, oregano, garlic cloves and sliced lemons or oranges. Mix the vegetables together and insert them into cavity of bird just before cooking.**