

Recipe for Deconstructed Heritage Turkey with Roast Breast & Braised Legs

As featured in our November 2010 *Food & Wine* article, “A Farm Fresh Thanksgiving”

We highly recommend this recipe! It's also great for a traditional broad-breasted turkey.

Ingredients

One 12-20 pound turkey
1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt, plus more for seasoning
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
4 garlic cloves, halved
2 celery ribs, cut into 2-inch lengths
1 carrot, peeled and cut into 2-inch lengths
1 onion, sliced
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 cup dry white wine
6 cups Turkey Stock or low-sodium broth
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
10 sage leaves
12 thyme sprigs
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
Freshly ground pepper

Cut the legs and wings off of the turkey; separate the drumsticks and thighs. Using poultry shears, cut off the backbone. (Reserve the wings, neck and backbone for making stock.) Set the breast, thighs and drumsticks on a rimmed baking sheet and sprinkle all over with the 1 1/2 tablespoons of salt. Cover and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or up to 24 hours.

Rinse the turkey parts and pat dry. In a large enameled cast-iron casserole, heat the olive oil. Add the thighs and drumsticks and cook over moderate heat until well browned all over, about 15 minutes. Transfer the turkey to a platter.

Add the garlic, celery, carrot and onion to the casserole. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables just begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste and cook for 1 minute. Add the wine and cook until reduced by half, about 5 minutes. Return the thighs and drumsticks to the casserole and add 4 cups of the Turkey Stock. Cover and braise over low heat until the turkey is tender, about 1 hour and 15 minutes. Transfer the turkey to the platter; strain the braising liquid and return it to the casserole.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350°. Spread half of the butter under the turkey breast skin; tuck in the sage and thyme. Spread the remaining butter over the skin.

Heat a large ovenproof skillet. Add the turkey breast, skin side down, and cook over moderately high heat until browned, 12 minutes. Turn the breast skin side up and transfer the skillet to the oven. Roast the turkey breast for about 1 hour, until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the meat registers 150°. Transfer the breast to a cutting board and let rest for 15 minutes. Add the remaining 2 cups of turkey stock to the skillet and bring to a boil, stirring to scrape up any browned bits on the bottom.

Boil the braising liquid in the casserole until reduced to 3 cups, about 10 minutes. Add the stock from the skillet. In a small bowl, whisk the flour with 1/4 cup of water; whisk this mixture into the liquid in the casserole and boil, whisking frequently, until the gravy is lightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer the gravy to a gravy boat.

Remove the bones from the thighs and slice the meat 1/2 inch thick. Transfer the thigh meat to a roasting pan along with the drumsticks. Cover with foil and reheat. Carve the turkey breast and arrange on a platter. Arrange the dark meat alongside; serve with the gravy.

NOTE: If you aren't comfortable cutting up a turkey, you can prepare this recipe using a 7-pound turkey breast on the bone, plus 5 pounds of turkey drumsticks and/or thighs.

Our Tips for Roasting Heritage Turkeys

- Heritage birds typically have a humped breast bone, and the bird will be somewhat leaner.
- We recommend that Heritage turkeys not be brined; this ensures the best possible texture, and maintains the natural intense flavor of these special birds.
- Let the turkey come to room temperature before roasting.
- Let the turkey rest for at least 20 minutes prior to slicing. This ensures evenly juicy meat.
- Because of Heritage turkeys' unique breast-to-leg ratio, the breast will reach doneness long before the legs and thighs. There are two ways to address this:
 - Roast the bird whole until the breasts are done, and then finish cooking the legs separately
 - Remove and braise just the legs and roast the rest of the turkey whole - see recipe to the left

Recipe for Roast Heritage Turkey

from Chef Dan Barber of Stone Barns and Blue Hill, NY

Ingredients

BN Ranch Heritage Turkey
butter
salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 475 degrees.

Let turkey come to room temperature. Carefully separate skin from the breast meat and rub softened butter on to breast.

Season liberally with salt and pepper.

Set the turkey, breast side up, on the rack of a large roasting pan. Tie the legs together with kitchen string. Roast for 20 minutes.

Lower the oven temperature to 350 degrees and cover turkey loosely with tin foil. Roast until the thermometer inserted into the inner thigh registers 150 degrees (2 to 3 hours, depending on turkey size).

Transfer turkey to cutting board. Let stand for at least 45 minutes to cool down. Remove legs and thighs, careful to not take too much skin with you.

Place thighs, skin side, on a roasting pan and continue cooking 40-45 minutes or until juices run clear. Separately slice breast and thigh and plate while still warm.