

Classic Holiday Turkey

Serves up to 12

If using self-basting turkey (such as a butterball), do not brine in step 1, and season with salt after brushing with melted butter in step 5. Resist the temptation to tent the roast turkey with foil while it rests on the carving board. Covering the bird will make the skin soggy.

1 cup salt

1 (12-14 pound) turkey, trimmed, neck, giblets, and tailpiece removed and reserved for gravy (recipe follows)

6 sprigs fresh thyme

2 onions coarsely chopped

2 carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped

2 celery ribs, chopped coarse

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

1 cup water, plus extra as needed

1. Dissolve salt in 2 gallons cold water in large container. Submerge turkey in brine, cover, and refrigerate or store in very cool spot (40 degrees or less) for 6 to 12 hours.
2. Set wire rack in rimmed baking sheet. Remove turkey from brine and pat dry, inside and out, with paper towels. Place turkey on prepared wire rack. Refrigerate, uncovered, for at least 8 hours or overnight.
3. Adjust oven rack to lowest position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Line V-rack with heavy-duty aluminum foil and poke several holes in foil. Set V-rack in roasting pan and spray foil with vegetable oil spray.
4. Toss thyme and half of vegetables with 1 tablespoon melted butter in bowl and place inside of turkey. Tie legs together with kitchen twine and tuck wings behind back. Scatter remaining vegetables in pan.
5. Pour water over vegetable mixture in pan. Brush turkey breast with 1 tablespoon melted butter, then place turkey breast side down on V-rack. Brush with remaining 1 tablespoon butter.
6. Roast turkey for 45 minutes. Remove pan from oven. Using 2 large wads of paper towels, turn turkey breast side up. If liquid in pan has totally evaporated, add another ½ cup water. Return turkey to oven and roast until breast registers 160 degrees and thighs register 175 degrees, 50 to 60 minutes.
7. Remove turkey from the oven. Gently tip turkey so that any accumulated juices in cavity run into pan. Transfer turkey to carving board and let rest, uncovered, for 30 minutes. Carve turkey and server with gravy.

Roasting times for Turkeys

	12 to 15 pounds	15 to 18 pounds	18 to 22 pounds
Number of servings	10 to 12	14 to 16	20 to 22
Oven temperature	400 degrees	400 degrees	425 degrees, reduce to 325 after one hour
Breast side down roasting time	45 minutes	45 minutes	1 hour
Breast side up roasting time	50 to 60 minutes	1 ¼ hours	2 hours
Resting time	30 minutes	30 minutes	35 to 40 minutes

Giblet Pan Gravy

Makes about 6 cups

Begin step 3 once the bird has been removed from the oven and is resting on a carving board.

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Reserved turkey neck, giblets, and tailpiece

1 onion chopped

4 cups chicken broth

2 cups water

2 sprigs fresh thyme

8 sprigs fresh parsley

3 tablespoons unsalted butter

¼ cup all-purpose flour

1 cup dry white wine

Salt and pepper

1. Heat oil in Dutch oven over medium heat until simmering. Add neck, giblets, and tailpiece and cook until golden and fragrant, about 5 minutes. Stir in onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook until turkey parts and onion release their juices, about 15 minutes. Stir in broth, water, thyme, and parsley, bring to boil, and adjust heat to low. Simmer, uncovered, skimming any impurities that may rise to surface, until broth is rich and flavorful, about 30 minutes longer. Strain broth into large container and reserve giblets. When cool enough to handle, chop giblets. Refrigerate giblets and broth until ready to use. (Broth can be stored in refrigerator for up to 1 day).
2. While turkey is roasting, return reserved turkey broth to simmer in saucepan. Melt butter in separate large saucepan over medium-low heat. Add flour and cook, whisking constantly (mixture will froth and then thin out again), until nutty brown and fragrant, 10 to 15 minutes.

Vigorously whisk all but 1 cup of hot broth into flour mixture. Bring to boil, then continue to simmer, stirring occasionally, until gravy is lightly thickened and very flavorful, about 30 minutes longer. Set aside until turkey is done.

3. When turkey had been transferred to carving board to rest, spoon out and discard as much fat as possible from pan, leaving caramelized herbs and vegetables. Place pan over 2 burners set on medium- high heat. Return gravy to simmer. Add wine to pan (I used water) of caramelized vegetables, scraping up any browned bits. Bring to boil and cook until reduced by half, about 5 minutes. Add remaining 1 cup of turkey broth, bring to simmer, and cook for 15 minutes; strain pan juices into gravy, pressing as much juice as possible out of vegetables. Stir reserved giblets into gravy and return to boil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.