



Freddie's Thanksgiving Turkey and Gravy

from his cookbook:

Back to the Kitchen: 75 Delicious, Real Recipes (& True Stories) from a Food-Obsessed Actor

Makes: 6 to 8 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 Butterball Fresh or Frozen Whole Bird Turkey (10 to 12 pounds)
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 6 fresh or dried bay leaves
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 medium onions, quartered
- 5 cloves garlic, peeled but whole
- 4 fresh sage leaves
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 1 orange, quartered
- 1 large carrot, chopped
- 4 cups (32 ounces) chicken stock
- 1 cup white wine
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Set a single oven rack on the lowest rung. Set a roasting rack in a large roasting pan.
2. Rub the butter all over the skin of the turkey and between the skin and turkey breast meat. To do this, separate and loosen the skin from the meat by slowly sliding your fingers between the two at the mouth of the open cavity. Slide 3 bay leaves in-between the skin and breast along with the butter on either side.
3. Generously salt and pepper your turkey, inside and out. Stuff the cavity with half an onion, 1 clove garlic, the sage, thyme, and an orange quarter. Do not overstuff. Loose and light is the trick.
4. Add the remaining onions, garlic cloves, and orange quarters, to your roasting pan under the rack along with the carrot. Add 2 cups of the chicken stock and the wine to the pan (this is your basting liquid, and eventually your gravy).
5. Place the turkey on the rack and lightly cover the top with foil. Roast for about 20 minutes per pound, basting every 15 to 20 minutes, adding more stock or even water if the pan gets very dry. Remove the foil for the last 30 to 45 minutes. (You can also crank the heat up to 425°F right at the end for crispier skin.) Cook until the juices run clear, the leg is loose when you wiggle it, or a thermometer inserted into the thigh registers 180°F in thigh or 165°F in the breast.
6. When the turkey is ready, remove it to a cutting board and let it rest for at least 30 minutes before slicing and serving.
7. To make the gravy, strain the liquid from the bottom of the pan and add enough chicken stock to make 2 cups of liquid.
8. In a small saucepan, heat the olive oil over medium heat and whisk in the flour until the mixture is very smooth and just beginning to bubble. Add the drippings/stock mixture, bring to a simmer, and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring it smooth the whole time. Let it reduce to thicken into gravy. Transfer to a gravy boat and keep warm until it's dinnertime.

Secret Trick: When picking out a turkey size, you'll want about 1 ½ pounds of turkey per person.