



Publication: *Olive*
 Date: December 2011
 Circulation: 82,772



Roast turkey with chestnut and sage stuffing

3 hours + chilling and resting time

Serves 8 ■ EASY

I like to start the turkey prep the night before so it's ready to go straight in the oven on the day. You could also get the stuffing made up and cook it alongside the turkey for the last 40 minutes. Cooking the stuffing separately means you are in control of the cooking time, so you end up with a crisp top and sides, without drying out the centre.

sea salt

salted butter 100g, softened

turkey 1 oven-ready, about 4.5kg

onions 3 large

CHESTNUT AND SAGE STUFFING

butter 20g

onions 2 medium, peeled and diced

cooked chestnuts 300g, finely chopped

sage a small bunch

fresh breadcrumbs 100g

Granny Smith apples 3, peeled and grated

good quality sausage meat 200g

■ The night before, add 1 tsp sea salt and 1 tsp ground pepper to the butter and mix well. Wipe the bird inside and out with kitchen paper. Season the cavity with another tsp sea salt and tsp ground pepper. Take the butter mix and rub over the turkey.

■ Take a piece of greaseproof paper double the size of the breast and fold to make it a double thickness. Lay this over the breast to protect it during the cooking. Return the turkey to the fridge and leave to chill until the morning.

■ To make the stuffing, melt the butter in a pan and fry the onions over a medium heat until softened, then add the chestnuts and about 10 torn sage leaves and season well. Cook for two minutes then take off the heat.

■ Soak the breadcrumbs in 100ml water for a few minutes until the water is all absorbed. Add the cooked ingredients, apple and sausage to the breadcrumbs and beat well with a wooden spoon for about three minutes, to incorporate some air, which will expand during cooking and give you a fluffy rather than stodgy stuffing.

■ Butter a 30cm x 10cm ovenproof dish (approx), spoon the stuffing in (don't pat down, let it fall naturally) decorate with a few more sage leaves. Cook the stuffing after the turkey at 200C/fan 180C/gas 6 for about 40 minutes until crispy on top. Lay some fresh sage leaves over to serve. (If you prep it the night before, cover and chill.)

■ On the day take the turkey out of the fridge early to let it come up to room temperature. Calculate your cooking times - allow 20 minutes at high heat, then 30 minutes per kilo after you have reduced the heat. So a 4.5 kg turkey will take approximately 2 hours 40 minutes.

■ Heat the oven to 220C/fan 200C/gas 7. Cut the onions in half and put in a roasting tray. Put the turkey on a trivet or roasting rack and put in the tray. Bring a kettle to the boil and pour one cup of boiling water (about 250ml) into the cavity of the bird. Pour another 2 cups of boiling water into the tray with the onions, cover the whole tray with a double layer of foil making sure that it is well sealed around the edges. Put the tray in the oven and cook for 20 minutes, then reduce the temperature to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6 for the remaining cooking time.

■ After 1½ hours, remove the foil and greaseproof paper and close the door. Don't open it again until the cooking time is up. To test to see whether the turkey is ready, insert a skewer or knife blade into the point where the thigh joins the breast, the juice should run clear. If it is pink, then cook the turkey for another twenty minutes and test again.

■ Take the bird from the oven and strain the juice in the bottom of the tray into a large jug to settle. The fat will rise to the top, leaving the aromatic turkey and onion juice beneath. Skim off the fat and either thicken the remaining juice (see page 145 for a gravy recipe) or serve as it is. Leave the turkey to rest in a warm place for 40 minutes before carving. Meanwhile cook your stuffing and roast potatoes, (see page 68 for recipe).

■ PER SERVING 911 kcal, protein 857g, carbs 63.4g, fat 36.8g, sat fat 15.9g, fibre 4.3g, salt 3.15g

MATCH ROAST TURKEY & CHESTNUT AND SAGE STUFFING WITH PINOT NOIR

Pick pinot noir for the turkey. Chilean producer **Cono Sur Bicycle Pinot Noir 2009, Chile, 14%** (from £6.49, Booths, Morrison's, Sainsbury's, Tesco.com) has cherry fruit with bold, savoury undertones; or splash out on their **20 Barrels 2008, 14%** (from £17.99, Morrisons (in selected stores), Waitrose), which has superb red fruit with smoky, leathery notes and a long finish.