



Turkey with Mushroom Gravy

From Charlie Palmer's *Practical Guide to the New American Kitchen* Published by Melcher Media Inc.

Serves 10

- + Cornbread-Sausage Stuffing
- + Cranberry-Horseradish Relish
- + Brussels Sprouts with Chestnuts & Onions

Suggested wine pairing: Zinfandel from Dry Creek Valley

Opt for a starter and dessert that can be made days in advance so you can concentrate on roasting a spectacular turkey—which means taking the time to baste. With all the gadgets out there, the best way to baste is still with a stick of sweet butter. Peel the wrapper down from one end to keep your fingers from getting greasy (this is crucial if you keep grabbing the remote to flip between multiple Thanksgiving Day football games) and lightly rub the butter over the bird. The only other thing you'll need is a big cooking spoon: Periodically tilt the pan and spoon the drippings all over the roasting bird. Sure, this will create "stains" on the otherwise perfectly golden-brown skin. But from a taste standpoint, you can't beat it.

Turkey + Gravy

12–14 lb fresh turkey

- 1** head garlic, halved crosswise
- 1** lemon, halved crosswise
- 4 T** extra-virgin olive oil
- 1** onion, quartered
- Handful of fresh herbs
- 1** white onion, finely diced
- 2 T** chopped fresh tarragon
- 8 oz** white mushrooms, washed and quartered
- 8 oz** oyster mushrooms, torn into thin strips
- 3 T** all-purpose flour
- 6 c** chicken stock

The day before you plan to roast it, pat the turkey dry inside and out with paper towels. Rub the bird all over with the cut side of the garlic and then with the lemon halves, squeezing the juice all over, then stuff the garlic and lemon in the bird. Liberally season the turkey inside and out with salt and white pepper. Place the turkey in the roasting pan and refrigerate it (uncovered) overnight to allow the skin to dry.



Preheat the oven to 450°F.

Rub the entire bird with oil and season liberally inside and out with salt and pepper. Put the onion and herbs in the cavity of the bird, but don't pack them tightly—leave space for air to circulate. Insert a metal skewer into each of the turkey's thighs; this helps conduct heat through the meat so that it cooks more quickly and is done at more or less the same time as the breast. Place the turkey on a rack in a roasting pan and roast for 30 minutes, then reduce the temperature to 350°F and roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the thigh registers 155°F. (A turkey requires about 12 minutes per pound at 350°F, so a 12-pound turkey will take about 2 hours total.) Before carving, the turkey should rest for 20 minutes.

When the turkey is done, transfer it to a serving platter and tent it with foil to keep warm. Place the roasting pan over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and onion to the pan juices and cook until lightly colored, using a spoon to scrape all the caramelized bits from the bottom of the pan. Sprinkle the flour evenly over the pan. Cook over high heat, stirring with a flat sauce whisk, for 3 minutes. Add the stock and simmer, stirring frequently, for 20 minutes. Transfer to a saucepan and cover to keep warm.

Cornbread-Sausage Stuffing

- 2½ lb cornbread (use any basic cornbread recipe)
- 4 sweet or hot Italian sausages
- ½ c (1 stick) unsalted butter
- 2 c finely diced celery
- 1 softball-sized celery root, peeled and diced
- 1 red onion, finely chopped
- 2 T fresh thyme leaves
- 1 T celery seed, crushed
- 2 c chicken stock
- ½ c chopped Italian parsley
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Generously butter a 3-quart casserole.

Cut the cornbread into chunks and spread them out on a sheet pan. Toast in the oven until lightly browned and dry; let cool, then transfer to a large bowl.

Pierce the sausages in several places, then cook them in a sauté pan over medium heat until cooked through and sizzling; remove them from the pan and slice them. If there's more than about 4 tablespoons of fat in the pan, pour off the excess.

Melt the butter in the pan, then add the celery, celery root, onion, and a pinch of salt. Cook the vegetables until just tender, about 10 minutes. Add the thyme and celery seed, and cook just until fragrant. Pour in the stock and bring to a boil.



Add the contents of the pan, the sausage, and the parsley to the cornbread, stirring to mix. Season, then stir in the eggs. Turn the stuffing into the prepared dish and cover with foil. Bake for 30 minutes, then uncover and bake for 10 minutes longer.

Cranberry-Horseradish Relish

- 4 c cranberries, fresh or frozen
- 2 c granulated sugar
- 2 c diced onion
- 2 T grated fresh horseradish
- 1 c crème fraîche

Combine the cranberries, sugar, onion, and horseradish in a food processor and pulse until coarsely chopped. Whip the crème fraîche with a whisk and fold it into the cranberry mixture. Serve at room temperature.

Brussels Sprouts with Chestnuts and Onions

- ½ lb fresh chestnuts, or 2 c frozen peeled chestnuts
- 3 pt brussels sprouts, trimmed, outer leaves removed
- 4 T unsalted butter
- 3 c pearl onions, peeled
- 2 c chicken stock

Preheat the oven to 350°F. With a sharp paring knife, cut an “X” into the flat side of each chestnut. Spread the chestnuts in a shallow pan and roast for 20 minutes (the cut flaps of the shells will curl up). Remove from the oven and set aside until just cool enough to handle—if they cool completely they’ll be a real pain to peel. Peel the chestnuts, removing the skin as well as the shells, and cut them into quarters.

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil. Half-fill a large bowl with ice water. Drop the brussels sprouts into the boiling water and blanch them until crisp-tender, 4 to 5 minutes. Drain the brussels sprouts in a colander, then immediately drop them into the ice water. When the sprouts are chilled through, drain them. Cut the sprouts in half through the root end.

Melt 2 tablespoons of the butter in a large sauté pan over low heat. Add the onions and cook until lightly caramelized, 5 to 7 minutes.

Add the chestnuts and toss with the onions until coated with butter; continue to sauté until the onions are well caramelized, about 3 minutes. Increase the heat to medium-high and add the brussels sprouts. Sauté for about 2 minutes, then add the stock, which should quickly come to a boil, steaming the sprouts to heat them through. Stir in the remaining butter and season with salt and pepper.