



Turkey Tips

That Save Time And Money

Turkey Tips – A good entertainment plan that saves time and money is something to be truly thankful for. With the right plan, all that cooks will need to do on Thanksgiving Day is put dishes into the oven and remove them when they are done.

A few hints from professional chef Jim Coleman can help you save money while affording you more time to spend with your guests.

Turkey Tips – Plan and Prepare

Start freezing stale bread a few weeks before Thanksgiving so you can use it to make stuffing.

Plan the menu the weekend before Thanksgiving. Compile recipes into a recipe booklet for easy reference.

Save gas and time by making lists of ingredients so you will only need one trip to the store.

Cut up celery, carrots, etc. and store in ziplock bags for ease of use during the next few days of prep.

Make stuffing the night before and make it a little dry so you can add gravy on Thanksgiving day to moisten.

Cranberry sauce, pie, gravy, and side dishes can be made a few days ahead.

Save money by asking guests to bring cokes, tea, water, desserts, a salad and/or a side dish.

Turkey Tips – Table and Tools

Set your table in advance; everything from a centerpiece and glassware to plates and napkins.

Enlist the help of family members in preparation and cleanup.

Sharpen your knives beforehand to save time on food prep. That includes your carving knife.

“A sharp knife is one of the most important tools and essential for the holiday season with all the food prep and carving of the bird,” said Coleman. “Preparation can save time and money, and a quality knife sharpener can renew the knives you already own and save you from the expense of having to buy new knives.”

Turkey Tips – Thanksgiving Day

For a quicker cooking time, start at 400°F with breast side down; after 45 minutes, turn over and lower heat to 325°F. An 8-12-pound bird will cook in about 2-1/2 hours.

Get your carving knife ready. After the turkey is cooked (meat thermometer should read 180° when inserted in the thickest part of the turkey), cool the bird for 20 minutes.

Cooling makes the meat firmer and easier to slice. Remove and set aside the turkey legs and the last joint of each wing. Make a long, deep (to the bone), horizontal “base cut” into the breast just above the wing.

Slice down vertically through the breast until you meet the original base cut. This will release nice, even slices.

Refrigerate leftovers immediately. Add leftover cranberry sauce to mayonnaise to jump-start leftovers for sandwiches.

Here’s a quick and easy recipe to help prepare your tasty turkey in advance: Chef’s Choice Brine

(For 8-12-pound bird)

- 1 cup kosher salt (per gallon of ice water)
- 1 lime, cut into wedges
- 1 orange, cut into wedges
- 1 medium onion, cut into wedges
- 5 cloves garlic
- 4 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried sage
- 1 tablespoon white or black pepper



Place a frozen turkey in a large enough container, such as an ice chest, to submerge it in the brine.

Pouring with a gallon measure, pour in ice-cold water to completely submerge your turkey. Add 1 cup of kosher salt per gallon of water. Then add remaining ingredients. Stir until well combined. Top with ice cubes and store in cool spot overnight.

Use more lime, orange, onion, garlic, bay leaves, thyme, sage and pepper for more than 3 gallons of water. Discard brine after removing turkey and rinse turkey before placing in oven.

If you follow these tips, you will keep costs down and have more time for fun on Thanksgiving.

A well-carved turkey may be easier to achieve than many realize.