

Perfect Roast Turkey

Ingredients

20ml vegetable oil

1 x 5kg/11lb good-quality free-range turkey*

Onion cut in to quarters

1 large carrot cut in to quarters

1 stick of celery cut in to quarters

40g unsalted butter, softened to room temperature

4 sage leaves chopped

2 pinches sea salt

2 pinches freshly ground white pepper

200ml water

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1-2tsp cornflour for thickening the gravy

* Turkey recommendation

Preferably organically reared and wishbone removed.

Ask your butcher to remove the wings and neck and chop them into 2.5cm pieces - these can be used with the rough-cut root vegetables as a base in the roasting tray.



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Method

Remove the turkey from the fridge and bring to room temperature - this will take at least an hour.

When you are ready to cook, pre-heat the oven to 230°C/220°C Fan/Gas 8.

Heat the vegetable oil in a large, heavy-based roasting tray on the stove top. Add the chopped turkey wings, neck, and fry for 6-7 minutes, turning the pieces over every 2-3 minutes, or until evenly browned all over. Add the quarter cut vegetables and fry for another 2 minutes until evenly browned.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, add softened butter, chopped sage leaves, sea salt and freshly ground white pepper and mix. Using your hands, smear the seasoned butter mix all over the turkey.

Place the turkey on top of the wing, neck, and vegetables, then roast in the oven for 30 minutes.

Remove the turkey from the oven and baste all over with the cooking juices.

Reduce the oven temperature to 160°C/150°C Fan/Gas 3.

Pour the water into the roasting tray, then return the turkey to the oven and continue to cook for a further 1 hour, basting the bird with the cooking juices every 20 minutes.

At the end of the cooking time, test that the turkey is cooked through by inserting a skewer or roasting fork into the thickest part of its thigh; if the juices run clear, the meat is cooked. Alternatively, use a meat thermometer; if cooked, the temperature should be up to 75°C for 2 minutes. If the turkey is not fully cooked, return it to the oven until the juices run clear.



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Method

Remove the turkey from the oven and transfer the bird to a large, deep-sided tray, reserving the roasting tray the turkey was cooked in along with the cooking juices. Set the turkey aside to rest for a minimum of 30 minutes.

When you are almost ready to serve the meal, return the roasting tray used to cook the turkey to the stove top. Bring the cooking juices to the boil over a medium heat, scraping up any burned bits from the bottom of the tray using a wooden spoon.

Collect the juices released by the turkey as it was resting and add them to the gravy. Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper, if needed.

Reduce the heat until the gravy is simmering, then stir in the cornflour and cook until the gravy has thickened.

Strain the gravy through a fine sieve into a warmed jug. Keep warm.

To serve, bring the turkey to the table and carve into slices. Serve with the roast potatoes and vegetables. Pour over the gravy.

