

Title:

3 Non-Traditional Ways to Prepare Your Holiday Turkey

Word Count:

642

Summary:

3 Non-Traditional ways to cook turkey. The traditional way to cook turkey is to bake in your oven. You will learn how to cook turkey by deep frying, grilling or smoking.

Keywords:

turkey, deep fried turkey, grilled turkey, smoked turkey

Article Body:

3 Non-Traditional Ways to Prepare Your Holiday Turkey

Deep-Fried Turkey

3 gallons peanut oil for frying, or as needed
1 (12 pound) whole turkey, neck and giblets removed
1/4 cup Creole seasoning
1 white onion

In a large stockpot or turkey fryer, heat oil to 400 degrees F. Be sure to leave room for the turkey, or the oil will spill over.

***** Side Note *****

How to determine the amount of oil you need:

The easiest way I've found to determine the amount of oil you need is to place the turkey into the fryer and fill with water until the turkey is just covered. Remove turkey and allow to drain, pat dry with paper towels as well. Make note of the level of water in the fryer. Discard water and dry thoroughly. Fill frying vessel with oil to the level as noted above. This should help in preventing hot oil spill overs.

***** End Side Note *****

Layer a large platter with food-safe paper bags. Rinse turkey, and thoroughly pat dry with paper towels. Rub Creole seasoning over turkey inside and out. Make sure the hole at the neck is open at least 2 inches so the oil can flow freely through the bird. Place the whole onion and turkey in drain basket. The turkey should be placed in basket neck end first. Slowly lower basket into hot oil to completely cover turkey. Maintain the temperature of the oil at 350 degrees F, and cook turkey for 3 1/2 minutes per pound, about 45 minutes. Carefully remove basket from oil, and drain turkey. Insert a meat thermometer into the thickest part of the thigh; the internal temperature must be 180 degrees F.

Finish draining turkey on the prepared platter.

Grilled Whole Turkey

12 pounds whole turkey
2 cups water
3 tablespoons chicken bouillon powder
2 teaspoons garlic powder
2 teaspoons onion powder
1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
1/2 teaspoon chopped parsley
1 teaspoon paprika

Prepare an outdoor grill for indirect medium heat, and lightly oil grate. Rinse turkey, and pat dry. Place turkey breast side down on the prepared grill. Sear turkey on both sides until skin is golden to dark brown. In a large roasting pan, mix together the water, bouillon powder, garlic powder, onion powder, poultry seasoning, parsley, and paprika. Place turkey breast side down in the roasting pan. Scoop the pan mixture over the turkey. Cover tightly with foil and place on grill. Grill 3 to 4 hours, until the internal temperature of the thigh reaches 180F. Remove turkey from grill and let stand 15 minutes before carving.

Smoked Turkey

1 turkey 8 to 22 lbs., fresh or completely thawed
Sweet Pickle Brine (recipe to follow)
Maple syrup

Sweet Pickle Brine:

1 gal. water
2 1/2 cups salt, rock, pickling or canning salts are recommended

1/3 cup of light brown sugar
1 tablespoon Liquid garlic
1 oz. pickling spices

Mix well. You may need to adjust the amounts depending on the size of your bird. This recipe should suit you fine for an 8 to 12 lb. turkey.

Rinse turkey thoroughly with cold water, drain and pat dry. Prepare sweet pickle brine. Brine turkey according to the following schedule, 8 to 12 lb. bird 3 days, 13 to 16 lb. bird 4 days, 17 to 22 lb. bird 5 days. Remove from brine; rinse thoroughly in cold water and pat dry. Allow to dry in refrigerator for 24 hours.

Lock wings behind back and tie legs and tail together. Baste turkey with maple syrup before putting in smoker and every 2 hours while smoking. Position turkey on cooking grill. Smoke cook until done.

The best way to determine doneness is to insert a meat thermometer into the thickest part of the turkey (the breast) the internal temperature should read 180 degrees F.

Smoking food is more an art than a science; this recipe is not intended for the novice. Allot of factors go into determining the cooking time for a particular food when smoking.

Cool turkey in the refrigerator for 24 hours before serving to enhance the smoked flavor. You may serve the turkey right away if you wish.