

Title:

Is This The Year To Simplify Christmas Dinner?

Word Count:

580

Summary:

Are you hosting Christmas dinner this year? What do you think about making this the year you simplify it?

We know perfectly well that every year there's too much food on the table. We eat too much, we work too hard, and most years we get ourselves too tired to really enjoy everything.

What about making as much as possible ahead?

What about (gasp!) even cooking the turkey and making the gravy the day before?

There are lots of recipes on the internet for making the ...

Keywords:**Article Body:**

Are you hosting Christmas dinner this year? What do you think about making this the year you simplify it?

We know perfectly well that every year there's too much food on the table. We eat too much, we work too hard, and most years we get ourselves too tired to really enjoy everything.

What about making as much as possible ahead?

What about (gasp!) even cooking the turkey and making the gravy the day before?

There are lots of recipes on the internet for making the turkey ahead. You just have to put in "make-ahead turkey" and you can pick and choose the one that suits you.

A few years ago one of my sisters and I tried cooking our turkey the day before. It worked beautifully. The turkey tasted no different, although I admit we

"cheated" a little because

we also cooked another turkey on Christmas Day. So the guests could smell turkey cooking when they walked in.

Just the same, I am going to cook my turkey ahead this year, and I won't be cooking another one on Christmas Day.

I'm also going to make the mashed potatoes and gravy ahead. You can also find lots of recipes for make-ahead mashed potatoes and make-ahead gravy on the internet.

Imagine - all those roasting pans and mashed potato pots washed and put away before Christmas morning. Wouldn't that be super?

The other thing I am going to do this Christmas is limit the number of dishes. When we already have turkey and gravy and stuffing, why do we need a bunch of other side dishes?

Isn't one or two vegetables enough?

If you really think you need two vegetables why not serve frozen mixed vegetables? That way you get two for one, and you only have to use one serving dish.

Does that salad get eaten? Be ruthless answering this question. If you have wondered in years past why you (or your host of the year) bother making it, then just don't make it this year.

Of course if people love to have salad, then by all means go ahead and make it. Just prepare it the day before, so all you have to do at the last minute is add the dressing.

If all this sounds a bit heartless, then close your eyes for a minute and visualize what Christmas Day is really like. Do you have nuts and tangerines and maybe chocolates out in little dishes around your living room? Have people been eating a hearty breakfast at your house or somewhere else? Did it maybe include eggnog, shortbreads, candy canes and other rich treats? Have your guests spoiled their appetite a little even before they arrive?

Have you or your guests already been to a big meal on Christmas Eve? Do they have to go to other relatives tomorrow to have yet another feast?

Then ask yourself - will people suffer if Christmas Dinner is simple? Or will

they be grateful that they have the turkey and trimmings, but don't have to stuff themselves with hearty starter appetizers, turnips, squash, or whatever else you normally put on the table to make it groan?

What would you prefer?

If you would prefer to simplify Christmas dinner, then why not start right now, this Christmas?

Just remember, make everything you possibly can ahead, get those pots washed and put away. Pare down the number of side dishes, and don't serve a rich appetizer.

Then enjoy your own simplified Christmas dinner!