

Roasted Turkey and Pan Gravy for Giving Thanks

Serves 8

Make-Ahead: The turkey can brine up to 24 hours in the refrigerator.

Ingredients

6 quarts cold water, divided
1 cup kosher salt
1 cup packed golden brown sugar
1/2 cup Cajun Spice Mix (see recipe)
3 sprigs fresh rosemary, divided
One 14- to 16-lb whole turkey
2 onions, coarsely chopped
2 green bell peppers, coarsely chopped
3 celery stalks, coarsely chopped
12 tbs (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, divided
3 cups (about) reduced-sodium chicken stock
1/4 cup unbleached all-purpose flour

Method

To brine turkey:

1. In large pot, bring 1 quart water to boil over high heat. Add salt, sugar, and 1/3 cup Cajun spice mix and stir until sugar dissolves. Add 2 rosemary sprigs and remove from heat.
2. Pour mixture into container large enough to hold turkey, add 5 quarts cold water, and set aside to cool. Place turkey into cooled brine, making sure it is completely submerged. Cover and refrigerate for at least 12 hours and up to 24 hours.

To roast turkey:

3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Remove turkey from brine and discard brine, reserving rosemary sprigs, then pat turkey skin dry with towel. Stuff turkey cavity with half of onions, bell peppers, celery, and reserved rosemary sprigs. Tie turkey legs together with butcher's twine.
4. In small saucepan, melt 8 tbs butter. Remove from heat and stir in 2 tbs Cajun spice mix.
5. Place remaining onions, bell peppers, and celery in center of 14-inch deep-dish pizza pan or sheet pan. Place turkey atop vegetables. Brush some spice butter all over turkey.
6. Cover pan with foil and roast turkey 1 hour and 40 minutes. Remove foil, baste turkey with more spice butter, and roast uncovered about 1 hour and 20 minutes, or until instant-read thermometer reads 165°F when inserted into part of thigh nearest to thigh-hip joint.
7. Transfer turkey to carving board and rest 20 minutes before carving.

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Meanwhile, to make gravy:

8. Pour off accumulated pan juices from pizza pan into large liquid measuring cup. Let stand 5 minutes, then spoon off fat that rises to top. Add enough stock to measure 4 cups.
9. In medium heavy saucepan over medium heat, melt 4 tbs butter. Stir in 2 tsp Cajun spice mix and cook 30 seconds, or until fragrant. Stir in flour and cook, stirring often, 2 minutes. Pour broth into flour mixture. Bring to simmer over medium-high heat. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes, or until gravy thickens slightly. Season with salt and pepper.

To serve:

10. Carve turkey and serve with gravy.

Cajun Spice Mix

Makes 1/2 cup

Make-Ahead: Spice mix can be made 1 week ahead; store airtight at room temperature.

Ingredients

2 tbs each garlic powder and paprika

1 tbs each dried oregano, thyme, black pepper, onion powder, and cayenne pepper

Method

1. In small bowl, mix all ingredients to blend.



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