

The Perfect Thanksgiving Setup

Exquisite Table

Dishes: Family china may steer the table's theme, but introducing a few simple, contemporary pieces can create an entirely new look that is as personal as it is inviting.

Table: Favorite items like colorful linen napkins or a family heirloom can inspire the overall look. Employ a sideboard to keep plates and glassware handy for the second course and the dining table uncluttered. Serving a sumptuous Thanksgiving feast can be an exciting prospect, especially when the entertaining is fuss-free. All it takes is a little

planning and recipes that are delicious and simple to prepare. For Shirlene and Mark Brooks, in Otto, N.C., this means creating an occasion that draws on their country lifestyle. Thanksgiving classics--turkey roasted with butter and white wine, glazed ham, and cornbread stuffing--are served on a table decked with simple holiday touches. Side dishes, inspired by the Southern setting include: a savory cheese grits pudding, a quick-to-prepare version of hopping John (a stew of collard greens and black-eyed peas), and honey-glazed yams. Pumpkin cream pie ends the holiday meal. Follow our recipes, entertaining tips, and step-by-step plan so, like the Brooks, you too can host an uncomplicated yet unforgettable Thanksgiving.



The Perfect Thanksgiving Turkey

Ingredients:

1 (14-pound) frozen whole turkey, thawed*

1/4 cup butter or margarine, softened and divided

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper

1/4 cup fresh sage leaves

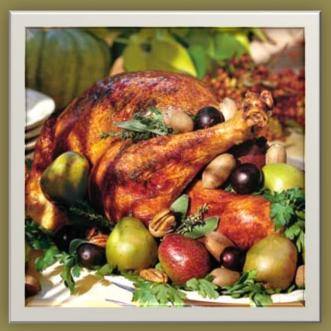
4 fresh thyme sprigs

1 pear or apple, halved

2 celery ribs, halved

1 large onion, halved

2 garlic cloves, peeled



Garnishes: flat-leaf parsley, pecans, Seckel pears, muscadines, fresh sage leaves, fresh thyme sprigs

Preparation:

Remove giblets and neck from turkey; discard. Rinse turkey with cold water; pat dry.

Loosen skin from turkey breast without totally detaching skin. Stir together 2 tablespoons butter, salt, and pepper. Rub butter mixture evenly over turkey breast under skin. Carefully place sage leaves and thyme sprigs evenly on each side of breast under skin. Replace skin.

Place pear halves, celery ribs, onion halves, and garlic cloves inside cavity. Place turkey, breast side up, on a lightly greased wire rack in an aluminum foil-lined shallow roasting pan. Rub entire turkey evenly with remaining 2 tablespoons butter.

Bake at 325° for 2 hours and 45 minutes to 3 hours and 30 minutes or until a meat thermometer inserted into thigh registers 180°, basting turkey every 30 minutes with pan drippings. (Prevent overcooking turkey by checking for doneness after 2 hours.) Remove turkey from roasting pan, and let stand 20 minutes before slicing. Garnish, if desired.

*1 (14-pound) whole fresh turkey may be substituted.

Oh, Our Ina:

Ina Garten (Food Network), has been with us from the very start. Since December 2013, Ina Garten has contributed, and has earned herself a special part of the JEH Family. We (JEH) couldn't be this successful without her, so we thank her for all of the things she has done for us.

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