

ROAST TURKEY

Chef John advises to cook your turkey a day or two ahead of time. What are the advantages? Opens up oven time on Thanksgiving day, precision cooking of both white and dark meat, delicious turkey stock.

Chef John Findley, Executive Chef, University Club of MSU

Featured Food: turkey

Yield: serves 10

Ingredients

16 lb turkey, thawed, internal pieces removed

Salt, pepper, granulated garlic and onion, thyme, rubbed sage, poultry seasoning

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place the turkey in a large baking pan. Blend all the spices together and rub the outside skin and inside cavity. Place in the oven and bake for 30 minutes. Reduce the heat to 325°F and cook for about 1 hour. Check the temperature of the turkey breast with a meat thermometer.

If cooking a day or two ahead, take turkey out of the oven when temperature reaches 140°F. Remove meat from bones, use two pans to sort dark meat from white meat, cover and refrigerate. Use the turkey carcass to make stock for gravy. On Thanksgiving day, an hour or so before dinner, finish cooking the turkey in a 400°F oven until internal temperature reaches 155°F. Let rest for ½ hour before slicing.

If cooking and serving, bring the temperature up to 155°F. Let the turkey rest for at least ½ hour. Internal temperature will increase to 160 to 165°F. Now the turkey is ready to slice and serve.