



Steam Roasted Turkey

This recipe is a good "starter recipe" if it's your first year cooking a Heritage turkey.

Picture shows a roasted Heritage tom with copious amounts of stuffing in the front "pouch".

Doesn't this bird look just like the bird in the [Norman Rockwell painting](#)?

Be sure to note these two very important points:

- ALWAYS cook your stuffing before putting it in a Heritage turkey. Because the birds are cooked hot and fast the stuffing will not cook completely if it is only cooked inside the bird.
- Use a meat thermometer to determine when the bird is done. Do NOT use a pop-up thermometer – those will over cook the meat.

Ingredients

1 Heritage turkey

Your favorite stuffing recipe

Butter

Water

Cooking Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 450 degrees. Plan on cooking the bird 1 hour for every 7 lbs of size.
2. Rinse the bird well and pat dry.
3. Put the pre-cooked stuffing in the bird. There are two places for the stuffing on these birds.



The first is in the body cavity as most people are used to - when you have filled this cavity with stuffing fold the tail up in between the pelvic bones and pin it in place. This will help keep juices in with the stuffing.

The second place for stuffing is in front of the breast bone where you see two big flaps of skin.



There is a lot of room for stuffing in there and the fat from the skin flaps provides a wonderful flavor.

Fill the cavity behind those skin flaps with stuffing till it is bulging and then truss the skin with a couple of trussing needles.

4. Put approximately 2 inches of water in the bottom of the roasting pan. The water should come partially up the thigh of the bird but not cover the breast meat. The purpose of the water is two-fold. It will steam the dark meat keeping it moist and tender. And it will serve as the basis

for your gravy by catching the drippings. Without this water you won't have gravy as the drippings won't survive the high oven temperatures.

5. Optional: You can add spices, herbs, and veggies to the water depending on what you like. Some ideas include: wine, sherry, or beer, herbs to compliment your stuffing, onions, carrots, and other root veggies, butter and/or body cavity fat.
6. Start roasting the bird at 450 degrees and keep an eye on the skin. Whenever the skin just starts to get golden, cover the bird with tin foil.
7. Baste often throughout the cooking - start with butter and then later in the cooking cycle you can use the juice at the bottom of the roasting pan.
8. Roast at 450 degrees for half of the estimated cooking time then reduce the heat to 400 degrees. Baste often and keep an eye on the water at the bottom of the pan - don't let it evaporate more than you will need for your gravy. Add more water as necessary. At the end of your cooking time you want enough of this water left to make gravy - but not so much that the drippings are too diluted.
9. Cook the bird until it reaches 140 to 160 degrees in the thigh. William Rubel suggests cooking to 145 degrees and we cook to 150 degrees with our own bird. Check the meat near the bones - if it is red cook the bird a bit longer. If it is just slightly pink or clear then take the bird out of the oven but cover with foil and let it sit. Please note: 160 degrees is the absolute maximum I would cook the bird to but at that temp it will dry out the meat quite a lot!

After Thanksgiving don't forget to make turkey soup and stock. You will be surprised at how much meat is left on the bones. Make stock, pull out half the liquid and freeze it, then add more water and make your turkey soup. Delicious!