Holidays with Chef Manny: Herb-roasted turkey breast with cornbread stuffing

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Featured topic and speaker

Looking for a delicious Thanksgiving centerpiece that's packed with flavor?

Chef Manny (@ChefMannyFD) shows you how to make an herb-roasted turkey breast with citrus pan jus and savory cornbread stuffing. Along the way, he shares simple cooking techniques and healthier ingredient swaps that can help reduce sodium and saturated fat without sacrificing flavor.

In this video, you'll learn:

- How to build flavor with fresh herbs, garlic and citrus
- Why Chef Manny uses olive oil instead of butter
- Tips for keeping turkey moist and juicy
- The secrets to homemade cornbread stuffing
- Ways to reduce sodium while cooking for the holidays

Whether you're hosting Thanksgiving dinner or simply looking for a delicious holiday meal, this recipe delivers big flavor with a health-conscious twist.

Southern Cornbread Stuffing Recipe

INGREDIENTS

8 cups prepared cornbread, cubed

1 lb. turkey sausage

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2 cups apples, diced

1 cup onion, diced

1 cup celery, diced

1 tbsp sage, chopped

1 tbsp thyme leaves

1 tbsp garlic, minced

2 cups reduced-sodium poultry stock

2 each eggs

2 tbsps olive oil

STEP 1: PREPARATION

Heat oven to 350°F. Spread cornbread cubes on a tray and dry 10–15 minutes, if moist. Oil the baking dish with ½ tbsp of the measured oil.

STEP 2: PREPARATION

Heat remaining oil. Crumble and cook turkey sausage to 165°F. Add onion and celery; cook 5 minutes. Add apples, garlic and herbs; cook 3 minutes.

STEP 3: PREPARATION

Cool the mixture slightly. Whisk eggs with stock. Fold sausage mixture and egg-stock mixture into cornbread; moisten evenly without crushing every cube.

STEP 4: PREPARATION

Transfer to dish, cover with foil and bake 25 minutes until the center reaches 165°F. Rest 10 minutes before serving.

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Herb-Roasted Turkey Breast Recipe

INGREDIENTS

3 lbs. boneless skin-on turkey breast

1 tbsp rosemary, chopped

1 tbsp thyme leaves

1 tbsp sage, chopped

1 tbsp garlic, minced

1 each orange

1 each lemon

1 cup onion, diced

1 cup carrots, diced

1 cup celery, diced

2 cups reduced-sodium poultry stock

2 tbsps olive oil

STEP 1: PREPARATION

Heat oven to 350°F. Pat turkey dry. Chop herbs and garlic; zest orange and lemon, then juice them separately. Reserve half the herbs for the jus.

STEP 2: PREPARATION

Rub turkey with 1 tbsp oil, half the herbs, half the garlic and citrus zest. Heat remaining oil in an ovenproof pan; sear skin side down 4–6 minutes, then turn.

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STEP 3: PREPARATION

Add onion, carrots and celery around turkey. Add 1 cup stock. Roast about 50–75 minutes; start checking early and cook the thickest part to 165°F.

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Speaker

- **Chef Manny**, Orlando Fire Department Assistant Chief of EMS and nationally known television chef

Transcript

Chef Manny: Welcome to *Cooking with the AMA*. I'm Chef Manny, and it's the holiday season. Today, I'm making turkey and cornbread stuffing. But we're going to do some things along the way. Reduced-sodium stock, fresh herbs and bright citrus. And it's all going to start with this beautiful turkey breast right here.

All right. Now, for our herb-roasted turkey breast. Of course, we gotta have the turkey breast. And then now we have our herbs—rosemary, thyme, sage, garlic. Now, also, we get to choose the citrus. We have the lemon, orange all those things to help build that flavor. So we got some rosemary, some thyme, some sage.

We have an orange and a lemon, so let's zest them up. So we get a zest, and remember, when you zest, the white part is bitter. So we always want to just keep it—zest it and keep it moving.

Another tip too is zest before I cut, because look, do all this work, you cut it, but now, look, how are you going to zest this? Who's going to zest this? Ain't nobody got time for that. I'm not zesting all this. So that's why I zest it before I cut. So real quick, just think of those

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different things while you're cooking, little tips that can help you look a little professional in the kitchen.

Now, citrus gives the brightness to the turkey. Juice, yeah. All right. You can smell that. Let's put in some fresh garlic. Of course, you can't forget salt and pepper. Some pink Himalayan salt and some pepper and olive oil.

Why are we using olive oil instead of butter? Because olive oil is a great carrier. Because now, you can bring those herbs and it helps coat the bird really well. Let's taste it. Let's mix it up there. It's got that citrus in there, a little bit of that garlic with the pepper and salt. This mixes it all together here, it mixes real well for that bird.

But first, before we sear this, let's put some flames on them. All right. Now that we have the flame set, we get this warmed up because we want to sear our turkey breast. First, we're going to pat it dry. I want to sure it's dry. There we go.

So now let's put some of this goodness on here. Because remember, a turkey breast doesn't have as much fat as other parts. So we want to make sure get it on there, get it all in there. Oh my gosh. You should smell this. The citrus, the herbs, the garlic.

All right. Now, so you want to make sure you have a pan up to temperature. And here we go. Remember, we want to put the bird skin side down first. Yes. And you can just smell the aroma of the aromatics, the garlic. I'm telling you, everybody in the house is going to be coming to the kitchen and saying, who's cooking? Who's cooking? This is what you're cooking. You could cook with AMA. That's what it is.

And yes, that's what we want. You see that brown? So let's get it out, and look at that. Got a nice sear on all sides there. Got a nice brown. That is flavor, people. That is flavor. All right, so the mirepoix here, It's the classic French classic of onions, celery and carrots. What we're doing is we're bringing those all in here and getting a little brown on them. Look at all this. Look at all that. You're getting that goodness from the turkey onto the mirepoix.

Now, let's get that turkey roasting. So let's first put it off to the side here. Right here. Remember, clean as you go, so make sure it's all good to go. Clean it up. Put it off to the side here. Let's get a roasting pan.

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All right. Let's get this bird on top of the mirepoix. All right. We're using reduced-sodium stock. It's just one little way to do a little healthier cooking. We don't want our bird to be dry, right? So we put it around here.

All right. Our bird is now ready, so let's put it in the oven. All right, so we got it covered here. Let's open the oven up. You want to set the oven to about 350. All right. The turkey's in the oven. Now, it's time for the stuffing. We're not just doing any stuffing, we're doing the cornbread stuffing. And we're being conscious of what we're using.

Look, we have turkey sausage, apple, onion, celery, sage and reduced-sodium chicken stock. All those things together to make one heck of a cornbread stuffing. Let's start off with the cubed cornbread. Prepared cornbread is welcome over here. If it's moist, you need to dry it out just a little bit. 350-degree oven for about 10 to 15 minutes. Save about a 1/2 a teaspoon of oil so I can save it for the baking dish. We want our stuffing to lift out when it's time to serve.

All right. Now, whisk in the eggs. Brown a pound of turkey in the remaining oil and check it reaches 165. Turkey sausage can still have plenty of sodium, so compare labels. The apples bring a little sweetness into the savory mix. Onions, celery, sage and thyme, and the reduced-sodium stock.

Fold everything into the cornbread. Go gently. We want the cubes to be moistened with some pieces left for texture. Give the liquid a chance to soak in. So we have some oil here. We just want to brush it, just make sure all ends are covered. So now, we don't have anything sticking. Make sure we cover it because we don't want it to dry out. Cover the dish and bake for 350 for 25 minutes.

All right. Our cornbread stuffing is complete. Now, it's time to take it out of the oven. You smell that? You can smell the sage with those aromatics of the onions and the celery. And this is for the holidays, so let's zhuzh it up a little bit, right? So you want to put a little fresh sage there. Oh, yeah.

Now, this cornbread stuffing is a great side for that turkey breast in the oven. Oh my gosh. Now, time for the big reveal. The next thing to do is build our au jus. So we take this sauce here and we're going to reduce it down, bring it all together to make a nice pan sauce for

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this bird.

You want the meat to rest. And as it does, it will continue to cook. Don't rush that, because guess what? You can have a dry bird, and we don't want that. Look what we've got here. We have that golden brown finish. And we just used the rest of the sauce to finish it all off. This is a holiday showstopper. And that right there is a roasted turkey with the citrus au jus. Put some flames on it, baby. Woo!

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