

Turkey Sets Mood For Xmas Holiday

It's Christmas—let the aroma of roasting turkey set the festive mood for your holiday dinner. Always a favorite because it's so delicious and easy to prepare, turkey has through long years of American tradition become our "holiday bird".

To enjoy a turkey dinner in Grandma's day, you had to buy a big bird and start preparing it early in the day, if not the day before. But today, because turkeys are produced in a wide range of sizes—from 6 to 24 pounds—you can find just the size to suit your needs.

If you're a homemaker who wants a traditional turkey dinner but something smaller or more convenient, then turkey parts or a boneless turkey roast can solve your problem.

A big turkey—one that weighs 16 pounds or more—looks good on a table. It provides plenty of tasty leftovers, and is your best turkey buy. These turkeys are usually a few cents cheaper per pound and there is a larger proportion of meat to bone.

Turkey parts—halves, quarters, drumsticks and pieces—although priced somewhat higher per pound than the whole bird, are excellent choices for small meals when no leftovers are desired.

Your food store will be well stocked with turkey during the

holidays. Your best bet in picking out a good turkey is to use the U. S. Department of Agriculture's grade shield as your guide. This official grade shield means that the turkey has been quality graded by USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. Only turkeys which have first passed USDA inspection for wholesomeness can be graded.

The top grade for Turkeys' the one usually found in stores, is U. S. Grade A. Grade A birds have good overall shape and appearance. They are meaty, have a well-developed layer of fat in the skin and are practically free from defects. Turkey parts, which may also be officially graded, must be meaty and have good appearance to be eligible for U. S. Grade A, says the Consumer and Marketing Service.

When selecting a turkey, you also will want to know the age of the bird. Age indicates tenderness and suggests ways to cook your turkey.

Young birds—more tender than older ones—will be labeled "young turkey," "fryer-roaster," "Young hen" or "Young tom." They're best suited for barbecuing, frying, broiling or roasting. Mature, less tender birds, are sometimes preferred for stewing and baking or in soups and salads. They are labeled

"mature turkey," "yearling turkey" or "old turkey."

The amount of turkey you should buy depends on the number of servings needed and whether or not you want leftovers. For an average serving you'll want to buy at least ½ pound of turkey per person—but you'll probably want more for a holiday meal.

To prepare your holiday bird for roasting, just wash and drain it. Place the turkey breast-side up—skin side up if roasting parts—on a rack in an open roasting pan.

If turkey browns early in the roasting period, cover the breast and drumsticks with aluminum foil or thin cloth moistened with fat to prevent overbrowning.

For a simple holiday meal, try a boneless turkey roast. Turkey roasts are excellent for small families, buffets and entertaining. They weigh 2 to 10 pounds and can be purchased as all white meat, all dark meat or a combination of both.

There's very little weight loss in cooking, and since there is no bone or waste, there are more servings per pound than with whole turkey—allow about one-third pound for an average serving. Turkey roasts usually are packaged with cooking instructions which should be followed for best results.

When selecting a turkey roast, look for the USDA quality grade shield. If your roast is U. S. Grade A you can be sure that the meat in it is from young turkeys of Grade A quality. The Consumer and Marketing Service says the USDA Grade A shield is also assurance that your roast will look attractive on the table—because a Grade A roast must remain substantially intact when sliced after cooking.

Christmas dinner need not be your only delicious turkey meal. If you have turkey leftovers or "planned-overs," you can create many different turkey dishes.

Here's a tasty dish you may want to try:

ZESTY CREAMED TURKEY
6 servings, about ½ cup each:
¼ cup chopped onion, ¼ cup turkey fat, butter, or margarine, 3 tablespoons flour, 1½ cups turkey broth (unsalted), ½ cup light cream or milk, ½ teaspoon salt, 2 teaspoons curry powder, ¼ teaspoon ginger, 3½ cups chopped, cooked turkey,

Slowly cook the onion in fat until it is tender. Blend in the flour. Stir in broth and cream or milk. Cook mixture until it is thickened, stirring often. Add salt, curry powder, ginger, and turkey. Cook over low heat (or hot water) until hot—about 15 minutes. Serve over rice, chow mein noodles, or toast.

The number of veterans taking police, fireman and other "protective service" training under the GI Bill increased by 90 percent during FY 70. Police and fire departments interested in setting up a program should contact their nearest VA office; interested veterans should apply at local police and fire departments.

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