

# QUICK GUIDE TO CHEF NANCY'S TOP Special Occasion Resources

Unleash Your Inner Chef  
*It's easier than you think*

Access many of Chef Nancy's Thanksgiving, Christmas, and special occasion recipes, and cooking and sourcing tips:

- [Nancy's website & blog](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [X/Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)



Learn Nancy's [kitchen knife skills and sharpening tips](#).

Learn how to [make your own simple stock](#).

Get Nancy's delicious [special occasion stuffing system](#).

Get Nancy's [turkey dinner serving survival notes](#).

Discover Chef Nancy's [turkey roasting tips](#) (see next page).

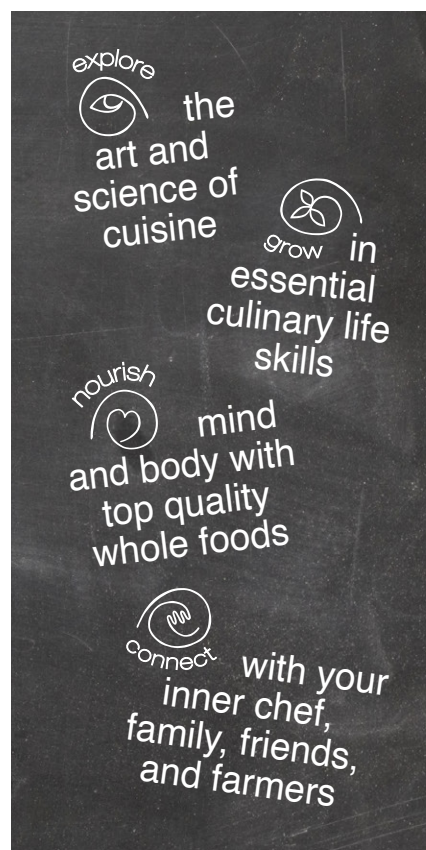
Learn how to obtain perfect cooking results—[without over or undercooking](#)—every time!

Ask Nancy for her [free recipe e-booklet for a savoury vegetable sauté](#) recipe!

Get the top 10 tips you must know before you [throw a dinner party](#).

Uncover Nancy's top tips for a [no-stress holiday dinner](#).

Explore how Chef Nancy's four-tenant philosophy helps you love cooking and have your [best food experiences](#).



Subscribe to Nancy's [free newsletter to get](#) all the latest recipes, cooking systems and news in your inbox! Never miss out on delicious cooking inspiration.



chef **NANCY HENLEY**

1-888-607-0333  
[TreeHouseKitchen.ca](http://TreeHouseKitchen.ca)



# Turkey Roasting Tips

## Suggested Equipment

- Roasting pan (I recommend not disposable)
- Roasting rack
- Tin foil
- Wooden spoons
- Two medium pots
- Meat thermometer
- Small mixing bowl
- Pastry brush or baster
- Whisk and strainer
- Sharp large knife for carving
- Large cutting board and large cookie sheet to catch juices
- An extra pair of hands during carving!

## Sourcing Turkey

Buy an Ontario turkey! Consider working with a fresh (not frozen) turkey, which may require pre-ordering from your butcher. Overall, a fresh turkey is less hassle and tastes better! Do some investigating and ask your butcher about the source of your turkey and the farmer about their farming practices.

## Safe Cooking

**oven temperature 325 F (160 C)—never cook a turkey at less than 325 F (160 C)**

Weight (lbs / kg)	Stuffed (hours)	Unstuffed (hours)	Serves
6-8 lbs / 3-3.5 kg	3 to 3¼	2½ to 2¾	5-7
8-10 lbs / 3.5-4.5 kg	3¼ to 3½	2¾ to 3	7-8
10-12 lbs / 4.5-5.5 kg	3½ to 3¾	3 to 3¼	8-10
12-16 lbs / 5.5-7 kg	3¾ to 4	3¼ to 3½	10-13
16-22 lbs / 7-10 kg	4 to 4½	3½ to 4	13-18

The above general guidelines always yield positive results for me. As a general rule, the turkey’s doneness falls within the range of these cooking times. Check out the Turkey Farmers of Canada’s [Plan Perfect Portions calculator](#) for fantastic turkey weight and portion planning that factors in adults/kids, big/light eaters and leftovers.

### doneness

Turkey is done when a meat thermometer—set and operating correctly—indicates doneness. For the safest judgement, double-check with logic and common sense:

- Does the meat thermometer inserted in a turkey's inner thigh (avoid touching the bone) read 180F (82 C)? Interior stuffing must reach a temperature of at least 165 F (74 C).
- Do the legs move easily when twisted gently? Do the juices run clear, not red? This means the turkey juices look yellow or clear like stock, not brownish or reddish, indicating rawness.

### food safety

- A common kitchen mistake made is rinsing the turkey. DO NOT rinse the turkey. Splattering can encourage the spread of bacteria (cross-contamination).
- Keep your hands and surfaces clean by washing with hot, soapy water.
- Replace tea towels, cloths and kitchen sponges.

For additional poultry safety, storage and preparation tips, visit these websites:

- [Turkey Farmers of Ontario](#)
- [Unlock Food by Dietitians of Canada](#) (Search for “turkey food safety”)
- [Government of Canada](#)

### Preparing, Cooking and Carving Turkey

I like to cook my turkey old-school, breast-side up, uncovered, seasoned and lightly stuffed, in a roasting pan in the oven. Here are some of my top tips to help you make your own!

#### first things first

- Before planning your gathering and buying your turkey and roasting pan, verify your oven size!
- Remove neck and giblets from body cavities immediately, refrigerate and use within two days.

#### make a neck and giblet stock!

*You can use the liquid as part of your gravy and save the meat for people or dog snacks.*

- Add lightly salted water (at least 1 inch above the neck and giblets) and a few pieces of onion, celery and carrot.
- Bring to a boil, then lower the heat to a simmer and cook until the meat is tender, 40 minutes to an hour.

#### make your own turkey herb rub!

##### ingredients

*Suggested quantity for a medium-sized turkey (with dried spices):*

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1½ tsp paprika
- 1 tsp garlic
- 1 tbsp mixture of rosemary, sage, tarragon
- 1 tbsp thyme
- 2½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper

##### steps

- Combine all ingredients (to your taste) in a small bowl.

#### prepping the bird

- Season the bird with a turkey herb rub—or just use salt and pepper—and rub all over, top to bottom.
- Stuff the bird with stuffing (try [Chef Nancy's Special Occasion Stuffing System recipe](#)), or add a sprig of sage, rosemary, thyme, a bay leaf or some orange slices to the cavity.
- To decrease the risk of salmonella poisoning, stuff birds at the last minute before cooking, and do not pack the stuffing tightly. Alternatively, cook the stuffing separately.
- Secure the legs by tucking them under a band of skin or tie them loosely with string.
- Fold the wings behind the back to secure the neck skin.

#### cooking the bird

- Place the turkey breast up (the meatier/plumper side up) on the roasting rack in a somewhat shallow (for more efficient cooking), sturdy (for ease and safety while lifting and basting the bird) roasting pan.
- If the bird is stuffed, insert the meat thermometer into the centre of the stuffing. (Check both the thigh and the centre of the stuffing to be sure.)
- If unstuffed, insert a meat thermometer into the inner thigh, being careful not to touch the bone.

- Roast the turkey at 325 F (160 C) using the Safe Cooking table as a doneness guide, basting regularly with pan juices (or brushing juices over the bird with a pastry brush).
- Check for doneness at the shorter end of the doneness range to avoid overcooking the turkey, as various factors will affect cooking time.
- When turkey is at its optimal golden colour, tent it loosely with tin foil to prevent further browning while the interior reaches the proper temperature.
- When the turkey is done, remove it from the oven. If it is done, it is DONE! There is no need to overcook a turkey "to be sure."
- Set it to rest for 15 minutes, tented with foil, to allow the juices to settle so they will not be lost upon slicing.
- At time-crunched dinner parties, allowing the foil-tented bird to rest is not essential. Keeping the turkey hot until guests sit down will be more of a challenge. To help with organization, get my [Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinner Serving Guide](#).

### make your own turkey gravy!

Given that it is a busy day and there never seems to be enough gravy for a large crowd, it is helpful to have chicken or turkey jus, chicken or turkey stock or other roasted bone sauces like demiglace made ahead and stored in the freezer. Whenever you roast a chicken, save and boil or roast the chicken bones to make stocks and gravies, which you can store in the freezer and label for use.

#### ingredients

roasting pan drippings

2 tbsp flour (or more for a very large bird and a large amount of drippings)

2 cups liquid combo of white wine (optional), chicken or turkey stock or water

1 pinch of dried thyme and sage or 1 tbsp mixture of fresh chopped thyme and sage

salt and pepper as desired

1 or more tbsp cornstarch

#### steps

- Everything left in the pan should be a medium golden or dark brown colour. Pour all liquid-oil drippings from the roasting pan into a medium-sized pot. Let the fat rise to the top, skim off the fat with a spoon, and discard. (If, for some reason, the bottom of the roasting pan is burnt, do not make gravy with it.)
- Sprinkle flour into the roasting pan and stir to coat the flour with the remaining brown particles and juices.
- Deglaze the roasting pan by pouring the liquid mixture into the pan.
- Add the thyme and sage.
- Place the pan on the stovetop and turn the heat to medium-low or low. Heat the pan carefully, constantly scraping the bottom to dislodge the turkey glaze.
- Strain and scrape everything immediately from the roasting pan (do not leave anything in the pan as this is high-flavoured goodness) into the medium-sized pot and heat it to boiling, whisking constantly.
- Taste and then season your pot gravy with salt and pepper.
- Make a cornstarch-water mixture by mixing 1 tbsp cornstarch with 2 tbsp cold water until any lumps have dissolved. Alternatively, follow the cornstarch package directions. Stir the cornstarch-water mixture while pouring it in a thin stream into the boiling liquid gravy until it thickens to your desired consistency. It should thicken immediately. Repeat this step if more thickening is required.
- Strain into a warmed gravy boat and serve.

### carving the bird

- An extra pair of hands is helpful if you are slicing a very large bird.
- Carve the turkey with a large sharp knife. Remember, temporarily honing a blade with a sharpening steel is NOT sharpening. [Read this for knife purchasing and sharpening tips](#).
- Keep the carved pieces warm under foil.
- Serve on warmed plates, as turkey tends to cool down fast when carved and distributed amongst a large family or group!