

From Scott Chinn

Cajun/Creole Thanksgiving

Deep Fried Turkey

Find a good and safe recipe for deep frying methods for a whole 10 – 15 lb. turkey (Tip: FoodNetwork.com has several)

Optional: Make a brine with 2 parts soy sauce to 1 part water or stock mixed with garlic powder to taste. Inject brine with kitchen syringe into flesh of bird.

Mandatory: Make a rub of roughly equal amounts of cayenne pepper, black pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, ground coriander, and ground thyme. Put rub generously under the skin of the bird before frying.

Sauce Bourguignon (to be served with the turkey)

Use whole bottle of good red wine, preferably Burgundy or American pinot noir. Add a cup of turkey broth or other mild stock. Add chopped onions, pinch of cayenne pepper, and garlic powder (Optional: add small amount of green peppercorns.) Cook and reduce by 1/3. Add dried parsley and thyme. Simmer for approximately 5 minutes, or until sauce thickens a bit more. Finish with butter and salt and pepper to taste. Sauce should not be too thick – closer to jus than gravy.

Creole Stuffing

Tear your favorite hearty bread into 1-inch cubes. Chop celery, yellow onions and good mushrooms to same size (equivalent to bread cubes). Add fresh sliced okra (not pickled okra) if available.

Find good andouille sausage and tasso (ham) – cube each to match size of other ingredients. Fry sausage and ham quickly – just a couple minutes – in small amount of oil.

Mix all ingredients in a large pot or Dutch oven. You should have enough bread cubes to equal volume of all other ingredients combined. Add garlic powder, onion powder, black pepper, salt, file (ground sassafras leaves), coriander, thyme, 2 bay leaves, and small pinch of cayenne pepper.

Pour in stock (turkey, chicken or vegetable) to 2/3 the level of the mixture. Stir.

Cook uncovered in oven at about 350 degrees until liquid is absorbed and top is crusty.

From Geoff Grodner

Hoosier-licious Chili

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil	3 tablespoons low sodium beef stock base or
2 pounds good quality beef chuck, cubed	4 low sodium beef bouillon cubes
1/2 pound Italian sausage – hot	3 tablespoons good quality red chili powder
1/2 pound Italian sausage – regular	1 tablespoon dried oregano
2 15-ounce cans dark red kidney beans, drained	2 teaspoons cumin
1 15-ounce can red beans, drained	1 teaspoon dried basil
2 28-ounce cans diced tomatoes with juice	1 teaspoon salt
1 6-ounce can tomato paste	1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 large onion, chopped	1 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
3 stalks celery, chopped	1 teaspoon paprika
1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped	1 tablespoon honey
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped	1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped	2 teaspoons (or more to taste) Nick's English
1 Serrano pepper, seeded and chopped	Hut Hoosier Hot Sauce
1 tablespoon minced garlic	1 bottle dark beer
1/4 pound bacon	salt
	black pepper

Directions:

Season beef cubes with salt and pepper. Heat olive oil in large stock pot over medium-high heat. Sauté beef cubes in small batches until brown and caramelized. Remove from pot and reserve.

Sauté Italian sausage until browned. Remove from pot and reserve. Drain excess fat from pot.

Heat large sauté pan over medium heat. Cook bacon until brown and crisp. Remove bacon, chop and reserve.

Sauté onion, celery and all peppers for 5 minutes in the bacon fat remaining in the sauté pan. Then add chili powder and sauté for an additional minute to bloom the chili powder.

Return stock pot to medium heat. Return beef cubes and sausage to pot. Add:

Beans, canned tomatoes with their juice, tomato paste, sautéed onion, celery and peppers, bacon, beef stock base or bouillon cubes, beer. Season with oregano, cumin, basil, salt, pepper, cayenne pepper, paprika, honey, Worcestershire sauce, hot sauce. Stir to blend. Bring to simmer, then cover and simmer at low heat for at least two hours. Taste and adjust seasoning. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

Refrigerate overnight.

Next morning, remove from refrigerator and skim any excess fat off surface. Place chili in crock pot on low heat and allow to simmer all day. At this point, you can either serve or cool and refrigerate again and serve the next day. To serve, top with shredded cheese and chopped cilantro and with tortilla chips on the side.

From Gary Klotz

A winter recipe for lamb

Ingredients:

17-pound leg of lamb (semi-boneless) trimmed of surface fat and shank bone removed
or shortened to fit into the casserole
6 carrots peeled and quartered
4 parsnips peeled and quartered
4 medium onions peeled and quartered
6 garlic cloves peeled and halved
2 bottles dry white wine
dry thyme or several sprigs fresh
fresh ground pepper and kosher salt to taste
1 tablespoon olive oil

This is a lamb roast that is similar to American pot roast but even more interesting.
This will serve 5 or 6 people.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Put olive oil in enameled cast-iron pot and scatter onions, carrots, parsnips and garlic on bottom of pan. Place lamb on top of vegetables and roast uncovered in oven for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with salt and pepper and season with thyme sprigs or dry thyme; roast in the oven uncovered for another 30 minutes. Remove from oven and place on stove over medium heat adding the bottles of dry white wine; bring to a boil and reduce the heat in the oven to 325 degrees. Cover with lid and braise in the oven until meltingly tender, at least 5 hours and as much as 7. The French call this lamb you can eat with a spoon so you can use tongs or a large spoon to serve it in chunks. You can make this one day ahead and degrease the pan juices and reheat them or do so with a spoon if serving it directly from the oven. Serve with roasted potatoes, soft polenta, buttered noodles or mashed root vegetables alongside some crusty bread and a simple green salad. Serve with a sturdy red wine from the Rhone such as Cotes du Rhone, Gigondas, St. Joseph or a Bandol.

The leftover lamb is great as an addition for Cassoulet, the French white bean casserole served with lamb, roasted duck legs, garlicky sausages and white beans (such as Cannelini or Great Northern) cooked in a broth of stock and white wine flavored with onions, carrots, herbs and garlic.

(This recipe is closely based on the Seven Hour Leg of Lamb recipe from Patricia Wells' Bistro Cookbook, named "Gigot d'Agneau a la Sept Heures Ambassade D'Auvergne".)

From Paul Velligan

Lentil, Spinach and Garlic Soup – or Stew?

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil

6-8 (or 10) garlic cloves, peeled, trimmed and left whole

1 small white onion (small dice)

1-2 small carrots (peeled and small dice)

1 small stalk celery (small dice)

(The dice on the vegetables shouldn't be too much bigger than the cooked lentils. It helps to cook evenly and lends to the texture of the soup – or stew)

1/2-1 tablespoons whole cumin seed (or substitute 1/2 tsp. or to taste dry ground cumin)

(If using whole cumin seed (preferred) toast in dry skillet over medium heat gently tossing until fragrant. Let cool to handle and crush (fancy equipment unneeded – use a rounded mug and the back of a teaspoon – the little effort is worth it).

1/2 teaspoon crushed dried red pepper (optional to taste)

2 1/2 - 3 cups water (or enough to cover lentils)

16 ounces dried lentils (sorted, rinsed and soaked in water in refrigerator overnight)

10 ounces frozen chopped spinach leaves (defrosted and strained)

16-ounce can of sliced stewed tomatoes

*Sliced green onions or chopped cilantro for garnish

Directions:

Drain, rinse and strain lentils and put aside.

Heat oil in heavy, large pot over LOW heat and add whole garlic. Slowly sauté garlic, tossing occasionally until cooked and golden about 10 -15 minutes depending on pan and stove. Take care to avoid the urge of cooking quickly; neither the oil nor garlic should brown or burn. After about 10-15 minutes, add onion, carrots, celery, cumin and, if using, crushed red pepper. Sauté mixture over low heat until remaining vegetables are softened.

After vegetables are softened, add sliced stewed tomatoes with juice, chopped spinach and lentils. Add water enough to cover, stir gently through and bring to boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered until lentils are tender, adding water as needed to keep lentils covered – about 1/2 an hour.

Judiciously season with salt and pepper; to further adjust flavor and consistency, blend about 1/4 to 1/2 of soup and about half the whole garlic cloves and stir back into the soup – or stew? If soup is still too thick, add water as needed to thin to taste and readjust salt and pepper seasoning as needed.

Top with scallions or cilantro. Great with crusty bread and a splash of vinegar.

From Robyn Moberly

Sea Bass in Cornhusks

Soak 2 fresh corn husks in water for each serving of sea bass. Soak for no less than 10 minutes. Meanwhile, make the Lemon Shallot Butter compound.

Lemon Shallot Butter

Combine:

1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened

1 tablespoon shallot, minced

1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

1 teaspoon lemon zest

So the butter can be sliced easily, shape into a log. Tear off a piece of plastic wrap and put the compound butter on it forming a cylinder. Roll the plastic around the butter so it seals completely. To form a perfectly round, smooth log, twist the ends and pull at the same time. Refrigerate until firm.

Place a fillet of sea bass (or any mild white fish) onto 2 soaked husks on a work station. The 2 layers keep the fish from burning on the grill.

Place fish fillet centered in the cradle of the husk. Season well with salt and pepper. Place a slice of compound butter on top. Place another husk on top of the fish and tuck into the bottom husk. Secure both ends of the packet with soaked cotton string. Grill packets over medium heat.

Cook about 10 minutes per inch of thickness. To serve, present fish in the grilled cornhusk, remove one knot, and pull back top husk. Great when served with fresh corn salad and good friends.