

mad's **thanksgiving guide**



***use this guide to to
cook for Thanksgiving
with confidence***

BY MADELINE TAGUE

mad *about* **food**

Thanksgiving Recipes

entrees



***dry brine
turkey with
herb butter***



***slow cooker
turkey breast
with gravy***



***oven roasted
turkey breast***



***make ahead
turkey gravy***

sides



***sweet potato
souffle***



***easy creamy
mashed
potatoes***



***crispy maple
bacon
brussels
sprouts***



***green beans
almondine***



***fresh green
bean
casserole***



***Italian
sausage
stuffing***



creamed corn



***old fashioned
baked
macaroni and
cheese***

more sides



**maple glazed
carrots**



**one pot white
cheddar mac
and cheese**



**apple
cranberry
sauce**



**kale
cranberry
quinoa salad**

drinks and appetizers



**apple cider
sangria**



**cranberry
kentucky
mule**



**fall
charcuterie
board**



**stuffed
mushroom
dip**



**whipped goat
cheese dip**



**asparagus
and cheddar
galette**



**prosciutto
wrapped
asparagus**



**maple
cinnamon
snack mix**

desserts



***pecan pie
brownies***



***easy apple
tart***



***sweet potato
cheesecake***



***pumpkin pie
bars***



***pumpkin
blondies***



***pumpkin
banana bread***



***easy pumpkin
cake***



spice cake

breakfast



***pumpkin
challah
french toast***



***honey butter
biscuits***



***overnight
french toast
casserole***



***croissant
breakfast
casserole***

Let's Talk Turkey

use this timeline to cook a delicious turkey without stress

follow this [dry brine turkey recipe](#)



~10 DAYS BEFORE

- **Purchase** a fresh or frozen turkey. If fresh you will usually be order ahead from a butcher. I find frozen to be just as delicious
- Plan for 1 lb of turkey per guest

4-5 DAYS BEFORE (MAYBE MORE IF A VERY LARGE TURKEY)

- **Defrost the turkey** - leave one day in the fridge per 4-5lbs of turkey
- **Don't forget** to leave one day before Thanksgiving as a buffer because you will need 24 hours for brining
- For example, if you have a 15 lb turkey, put it in the fridge first thing the Sunday before Thanksgiving or even Saturday night

WEDNESDAY MORNING - THE DAY BEFORE THANKSGIVING

- **Start the dry brine** - Mix orange zest and salt and rub all over the outside of the turkey - get every corner!
- Leave it naked (uncovered) on a sheet pan in the fridge until Thursday morning
- Make the herb butter for the turkey and this [make ahead turkey gravy](#).

THANKSGIVING DAY - THE BIG DAY!!

- **Ideally you want the turkey done 30 minutes before the meal** - for a 15lb turkey I put it in the oven 4 hours before we plan to eat. Turkeys usually take 13-15 minutes to cook per lb of meat.
- Brush off any excess salt - most should have absorbed into the skin. Place turkey on a roasting rack and stuff with oranges, onion and a bundle of herbs.
- Slide herbed butter under the skin and tie the legs together
- Bake according to recipe instructions and baste throughout the baking process
- Make sure you have a good thermometer - cook time is all about the internal temperature of the turkey.
- Allow it to rest for 20 minutes before you carve and serve!

Things you can make ahead of time

take the pressure off Thanksgiving day by working ahead

SIDES

- **Baked Macaroni and Cheese** - can be made up to 48 hours in advance. Prep up until the point of baking. Bake day of and warm just before serving.
- **Apple Cranberry Sauce** - can be made up to 3 days in advance. Keep in an airtight container in the fridge. Serve chilled
- **Make Ahead Turkey Gravy** - prep up to 3 days in advance. Keep in an airtight container in the fridge. Warm on the stovetop before serving the meal. Season as needed before serving.
- **Sweet Potato Souffle** - can be made up to 48 hours in advance. Prep up until the point of baking. Bake day of and warm just before serving.
- **Fresh Green Bean Casserole** - can be made up to 48 hours in advance. Prep up until the point of baking. Bake day of and warm just before serving.
- **Creamed Corn** - prep up to 48 hours in advance. Keep in an airtight container in the fridge. Warm on the stovetop before serving the meal. Season as needed before serving.
- **Kale Cranberry Quinoa Salad** - Prep all components and store separately. Mix about 1 hour before serving the meal

DRINKS AND APPETIZERS

- **Apple Cider Sangria** - can be prepped up to 24 hours in advance. Prep garnishes and store separately. Serve chilled with ice and garnishes on the side.
- **Cranberry Kentucky Mule** - prep the cranberry syrup in a large batch up to 3 days in advance
- **Fall Charcuterie Board** - Slice meats and cheese up to 24 hours in advance. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and store in the fridge. Have someone help assemble day of.



Thanksgiving Day Timeline

use this day of timeline as a guide. This is based on a 5pm dinner so adjust as needed for your gathering.

THE DAY BEFORE - DOUBLE CHECK YOUR INGREDIENTS

- send someone to the store for any last minute items
- plan out your serving dishes and add a post it on each one so that people can help you serve the meal



7AM - CUBE BREAD FOR STUFFING AND PLACE IN THE OVEN TO DRY IT OUT

8AM TO 10AM - PREP ANY OTHER SIDE DISHES

- This is when I roast brussels sprouts and make the mashed potatoes. those are the 2 sides that I don't like to make ahead of time

8AM TO 12PM - BAKE STUFFING AND ANY SIDES YOU PREPPED THE DAYS BEFORE

- cover tightly with foil after baking and leave at room temperature so they can be easily be warmed later

11:30AM - PREP TURKEY TO BAKE

- fill with oranges, onions and herbs
- spread herbed butter under skin

12PM TO 1PM - DEPENDING ON ITS SIZE - TURKEY GOES INTO THE OVEN

1PM TO 4:30PM - BABYSIT THE TURKEY, BASTING REGULARLY

- this is a good time to get yourself showered, dressed and ready
- assign someone else to babysit your turkey while you get ready

3PM - PUT OUT APPETIZERS

3:30PM - GUESTS ARRIVE

4PM - START WARMING UP STOVETOP ITEMS

- I warm gravy, mashed potatoes, creamed corn and maple bacon brussels at this time

4:30PM ISH - TURKEY COMES OUT OF THE OVEN ANY SIDES THAT NEED TO BE WARMED GO INTO THE OVEN

- let the turkey rest for 20 minutes before carving.
- Arrange on a platter and garnish with fresh herbs
- Place sides in the oven to warm - sides should be fully cooked already

5PM - DINNER IS SERVED!



thank you!

Thank you for supporting my small business. I truly hope that you enjoyed making these recipes.

If you want more easy to make and healthy recipes, make sure to check out my blog [**MadAboutFood.co**](https://MadAboutFood.co)
We have hundreds of recipes for you to try!

And be sure to follow me on social media!

 [**@Mad About Food**](https://www.instagram.com/_MadAboutFood)

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