

NO HOTLINE NECESSARY

THESE TECHNIQUES AND RECIPES DEFY EVERY POTENTIAL PITFALL (COUGH, DRY TURKEY), SO YOUR THANKSGIVING WILL BE DELICIOUS—AND DRAMA-FREE.

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PITFALL No. 1
dry turkey

SOLUTION Skip the whole bird, since breast and legs cook at different speeds, and cook the breast only (or two, for a larger crowd) for a succulent white-meat feast.

ROASTED TURKEY BREAST WITH CARAWAY-MUSTARD-LEMON BUTTER

HANDS-ON TIME:
15 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 3 HOURS,
15 MINUTES
SERVES 8

- 10 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons caraway seeds
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 7- to 8-pound bone-in turkey breast
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

HEAT oven to 425° F. Combine the butter, caraway seeds, lemon juice, and 1 teaspoon each salt and pepper in a medium bowl until well blended.

ARRANGE the turkey on a rack set over a baking sheet. Using your fingertips, carefully loosen the skin from the breast, starting at the neck end. Spread the caraway butter under the skin and over the breast in an even layer. Rub the oil all over the skin and season with 1 teaspoon salt.

ROAST for 30 minutes, until golden. Reduce temperature to 350° F and roast for about 2 hours, basting twice and tenting with foil if the turkey gets too dark, until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center of the breast registers 165° F. Transfer to a cutting board and let stand for 30 minutes.

CARVE the turkey and serve with gravy.

MAKE AHEAD: Rub the breast with the caraway butter up to 1 day before roasting. Leave uncovered in the refrigerator. Bring to room temperature 1 hour before roasting.

PITFALL No. 2
watery gravy

SOLUTION Add roasted onions and bacon, which give it body and flavor. And no lumps—it all goes in the blender.

CARAMELIZED ONION AND BACON GRAVY

HANDS-ON TIME:
25 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 50 MINUTES
SERVES 8

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 large onions, finely chopped
- 6 slices bacon, finely chopped
- 4 large cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1¼ teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped thyme
- 3½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
- Kosher salt and black pepper

HEAT the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring, until soft and caramelized, 30 minutes. Add the bacon, garlic, paprika, and thyme and cook, stirring, until the bacon is browned but not crisp, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in the broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until the bacon is tender, about 5 minutes.

USING a blender, puree the gravy in batches until smooth. Return the gravy to the skillet and keep warm over low heat. Whisk in 1½ teaspoons salt and ¾ teaspoon pepper. Serve.

MAKE AHEAD: Make the gravy completely. Cool and refrigerate, covered, for up to 3 days. Reheat on the stovetop before serving.

PITFALL No. 3
full before dinner!

SOLUTION Swap carb-heavy hot hors d'oeuvres for crisp vegetables that stimulate the appetite.

FALL CRUDITÉS WITH POMEGRANATE RELISH

Raid the market for the prettiest produce that's in season—tiny turnips, cauliflower, radishes, multicolored carrots. Trim or thinly slice the vegetables, then sprinkle them with sea salt, which will slightly soften them and intensify their flavor. Toss together some pomegranate seeds, finely chopped parsley, and a splash of olive oil; drizzle this mixture over the top of the vegetables. Serve with small dishes of nuts, olives, marinated artichokes, and sour pickles.



CRISPY ROASTED
SWEET POTATOES
WITH LIME

CREAMY MASHED
POTATOES WITH
SCALLION-CHIVE
BUTTER

PITFALL No. 4

too-sweet
sweet
potatoes

SOLUTION You can't beat this refresh (which *Real Simple* first featured in 2013). No mashing, no marshmallows, plus citrus and fresh herbs.

RS CLASSIC

CRISPY ROASTED
SWEET POTATOES
WITH LIME

HANDS-ON TIME: 10 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 8

- 4 sweet potatoes (3 pounds), cut into wedges
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ teaspoon lime zest, plus 2 tablespoons lime juice
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

HEAT oven to 425° F. Toss the sweet potatoes, oil, lime zest, and ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper on 2 rimmed baking sheets.

ROAST, tossing once, until golden brown, 15 to 18 minutes. Drizzle with the lime juice and sprinkle with the cilantro.

MAKE-AHEAD: Cut the sweet potatoes and juice the lime. Refrigerate, covered, up to 1 day in advance.

PITFALL No. 5

cold mashed
potatoes

SOLUTION Make them ahead of time (really). When you reheat potatoes in a casserole dish in the oven, they get hotter than boiled-and-mashed alone. A drizzle of hot herb butter (fat plus flavor) just before serving keeps them silky.

CREAMY MASHED POTATOES
WITH SCALLION-CHIVE BUTTER

HANDS-ON TIME: 15 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 1½ HOURS
SERVES 8

- 3 pounds russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 7 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1½ cups whole milk
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1 stick unsalted butter
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped scallions
- 2 tablespoons chopped chives

COVER the potatoes and garlic with salted water in a large saucepan and bring to a boil. Simmer until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain; return the potatoes and garlic to the hot saucepan.

MEANWHILE, in a small saucepan, bring the milk and cream to a simmer. Add 2 tablespoons of the butter. Pour the hot milk mixture over the potatoes and garlic. Season with 2 teaspoons salt and mash with a potato masher until smooth. Transfer the mashed potatoes to a 2-quart ovenproof baking dish. Cool to room temperature, then press the surface with a piece of plastic wrap. Refrigerate, covered, until ready to use.

HEAT oven to 425° F. Let the potatoes stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Remove plastic wrap and bake, covered, until warmed through, about 30 minutes.

MEANWHILE, melt the remaining 6 tablespoons of butter. Combine with the scallions, chives, and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Drizzle the herb butter over the potatoes.

PITFALL No. 6

gummy
stuffing

SOLUTION Soft bread can soak up broth like a sponge, making the stuffing dense and sticky. Toast the bread first for a lighter, chewier texture.

SOURDOUGH
STUFFING WITH
ROASTED
MUSHROOMS,
SHALLOTS,
AND CELERY

HANDS-ON TIME: 45 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 2½ HOURS
SERVES 8

- 1 pound sourdough bread, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 tablespoons butter, melted, plus more for the baking dish
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 2 pounds mixed mushrooms, halved or quartered if large
- 12 shallots, halved or quartered if large
- 6 celery ribs, diced
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- ½ cup heavy cream

HEAT oven to 425° F. Toss the bread with 3 tablespoons of the oil, 3 tablespoons of the butter, and ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Spread out on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake, tossing once, until

dry and golden, 15 to 20 minutes; transfer to a large bowl.

MEANWHILE, toss the mushrooms, shallots, and celery with the remaining 3 tablespoons each of oil and butter and season with 2 teaspoons salt and 1 teaspoon pepper. Spread on 2 large rimmed baking sheets and roast, tossing halfway through, until tender and browned in spots, 25 to 30 minutes. Transfer to the same bowl as the bread.

WHISK the broth with the eggs and cream in a medium bowl. Add to the bowl. Let sit, tossing occasionally, until the liquid is absorbed, 5 to 10 minutes.

TRANSFER the stuffing to a buttered 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Cover with foil. Bake until heated through, 30 minutes. Uncover and bake until the top is browned and crisp, 30 minutes more. Serve.

MAKE AHEAD: Refrigerate the stuffing in the dish, unbaked, overnight. Bring to room temperature 30 minutes before baking.



BEET AND RICOTTA
SALATA SALAD

CARAMELIZED
BRUSSELS
SPROUTS AND KALE
WITH CRISPY
CAPERS

SOURDOUGH
STUFFING WITH
ROASTED
MUSHROOMS,
SHALLOTS, AND
CELERY

GRAPEFRUIT-
APRICOT
CRANBERRY
RELISH WITH
ROSEMARY



PITFALL No. 7

boring,
wilted
salads

SOLUTION Add on this bright beet salad (a *RS* favorite that first ran in 2013). It can stand at room temperature without going slimy.

RS CLASSIC

BEET AND RICOTTA SALATA SALAD

HANDS-ON TIME:
15 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES
SERVES 8

- 4 medium beets (about 1½ pounds), peeled and cut into wedges
- 6 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint leaves
- 2 tablespoons chopped roasted almonds
- 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
- 2 ounces ricotta salata or pecorino, thinly sliced

HEAT oven to 450° F. Toss the beets, 4 tablespoons of the oil, and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast, tossing once, until tender, 30 to 35 minutes.

TOP with the mint, almonds, vinegar, ricotta salata, the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil, and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature.

MAKE AHEAD: Roast the beets up to 2 days in advance. Store, covered, in the refrigerator. Bring to room temperature before dressing and serving.

SOLUTION Unless you're a canned-cranberry fan (hey, we get it), keep your relish loose and fruity by adding less sugar and limiting the cooking time.

GRAPEFRUIT-APRICOT CRANBERRY RELISH WITH ROSEMARY

HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES
MAKES 3 CUPS

- 4 cups fresh or frozen cranberries (14 ounces)
- 1½ cups freshly squeezed grapefruit juice
- 1½ cups sugar
- ½ cup freshly squeezed orange juice
- 1 sprig rosemary
- ½ cup thinly sliced dried apricots (2 ounces), plus more for garnishing
- ¼ cup golden raisins

COMBINE all the ingredients except the apricots and raisins with ½ cup water in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil.

COOK over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until just thickened, about 15 minutes. Stir in the apricots and raisins and cook until softened, about 2 minutes. Discard the rosemary.

TRANSFER the relish to a serving bowl. Cool to room temperature, then chill. Stir in more apricots and serve.

MAKE-AHEAD: Make the sauce, cover, and refrigerate for up to 4 days. Bring to room temperature before serving.

PITFALL No. 8

stiff
cranberry
sauce

PITFALL No. 9

sad, limp
green
vegetables

moderate heat, stirring, until golden and crisp, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer the capers to a paper towel-lined plate.

ADD 2 tablespoons of the oil, half the Brussels sprouts, and half the onion to the skillet. Season with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon black pepper. Cook over moderate heat, stirring, until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a large plate. Repeat with the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil, Brussels sprouts, and onion.

RETURN all the Brussels sprouts to the skillet and stir in the kale, lemon juice, red pepper, and Parmesan. Season with ½ teaspoon salt and stir to combine. Transfer to a serving platter and garnish with the capers and more Parmesan.

SERVE warm or at room temperature.

MAKE-AHEAD: Slice the vegetables and refrigerate in airtight containers for up to 2 days.

SOLUTION Quickly sauté the greens to keep them bright and fresh. You'll also save oven space.

CARAMELIZED BRUSSELS SPROUTS AND KALE WITH CRISPY CAPERS

HANDS-ON TIME:
30 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES
SERVES 8

- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- ¼ cup drained capers, patted dry
- 2 pounds Brussels sprouts, thinly sliced
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 8 cups (5 ounces) baby kale
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 fresh red long pepper, thinly sliced
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan, plus more for garnishing

HEAT 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large skillet. Add the capers and cook over

PITFALL No. 10

piecrust
that won't
cooperate

SOLUTION Skip the pie altogether. Make an easy-to-patch lattice-top tart, a classic from the RS recipe files.

RS CLASSIC

RASPBERRY CROSTATATA

HANDS-ON TIME: 20 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR, 10 MINUTES (INCLUDES CHILLING)
SERVES 8

- 2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling
 - ½ cup sugar
 - ¼ teaspoon baking soda
 - ¼ teaspoon fine salt
 - ½ cup cold unsalted butter (1 stick), cubed
 - 1 egg
 - ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 - 1 cup seedless raspberry or other favorite jam
- PULSE** the flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt in a food processor fitted with a metal blade until combined.
- ADD** the butter and pulse until the dough just begins to clump together.
- ADD** the egg and vanilla and continue to process until the dough comes together into a ball. Scrape down the sides of the bowl, if necessary.

SHAPE into a disk, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate at least 20 minutes or until firm.

HEAT oven to 350° F. Press half the dough into the bottom of a 9-inch pie or tart pan, creating about a ½-inch-tall rim around the edge; set aside.

HEAT the jam in a saucepan over low heat until just melted. Pour it into the prepared pan.

TO MAKE THE LATTICE, roll the remaining dough into an 8-inch round on a floured surface, then cut with a pizza wheel or scalloped pastry cutter into 8 strips. Arrange over the jam in a crisscross pattern. Trim the ends and press together to patch as needed.

BAKE until the crust is golden and the jam starts to bubble, 25 to 30 minutes. Cool before serving.

MAKE AHEAD: Bake the pie and keep, wrapped in plastic, at room temperature for up to 2 days.

SOLUTION Start with a foolproof dough that you press into the pan—no rolling required.

SPICED MIXED-NUT PIE

HANDS-ON TIME: 25 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 2 HOURS (INCLUDES CHILLING)
SERVES 8

- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 10 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed
- ½ teaspoon fine salt
- 3 eggs
- ¾ cup dark brown sugar
- ½ cup light corn syrup
- 2 tablespoons dark rum
- 1½ teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 3 cups salted roasted mixed nuts
- Whipped cream or vanilla ice cream, for serving (optional)

PULSE the flour, butter, and salt in a food processor fitted with a metal blade until the mixture resembles coarse meal, with a few pea-size clumps of butter remaining. Add ½ cup ice water. Pulse until the dough is still crumbly but holds together when squeezed.

PRESS evenly into the bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch pie plate to hang ¼ inch over the rim. Decoratively crimp the edge with a fork or your thumb. Freeze the piecrust until firm, 30 to 40 minutes.

HEAT oven to 375° F.

BEAT the eggs with the brown sugar, corn syrup, rum, pumpkin pie spice, and vanilla in a large bowl. Stir in the nuts. Scrape the filling into the piecrust and place on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake until the pie is mostly set but still slightly wobbly in the center, 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool completely.

SERVE with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream, if desired.

MAKE-AHEAD: Press the dough into the pan, wrap well, and freeze for up to 2 weeks. Or bake the pie and keep, wrapped in plastic, at room temperature for up to 2 days.



BIRD BASICS
For a detailed guide to roasting the best whole turkey, go to realsimple.com/turkey.

YOUR BIGGEST THANKSGIVING HANG-UP IS...

How to get everything to the table, hot, at the same time. (How do we know? We asked on Facebook, and a lot of you answered.) There's no magic bullet. It's a big meal. But here are three basic tips, whether you're using the menu here or not: Do as much ahead of time as you can, serve things that taste great at room temperature, and have a mix of cook-in-the-oven and cook-on-the-stovetop dishes. (This menu is about 60-40.) Here's a timeline to help you stay organized.

UP TO 2 DAYS BEFORE

- Thaw the turkey breast, if frozen. Stuff it with the herb butter.
- Make the gravy, cranberry sauce, and mashed potatoes.
- Make and refrigerate the piecrusts.
- Toast the bread and cut the vegetables for the stuffing.
- Roast the beets.

THE NIGHT BEFORE

- Prep the vegetables for the sides and the crudité tray.
- Bake the pies.
- Prep, but don't bake, the stuffing.

4 HOURS BEFORE

- Take out the cranberry sauce.
- Roast the turkey and let it rest.

1½ HOURS BEFORE

- Remove the stuffing from the refrigerator.

1 HOUR BEFORE

- Bake the stuffing.
- Make the Brussels sprouts.
- Remove the mashed potatoes from the refrigerator.

½ HOUR BEFORE

- Cook the mashed potatoes and sweet potatoes.
- Heat the gravy.

