

BUONA DOMENICA

Cathy Whims's Thanksgiving Turchetta

A stuffed and rolled roast turkey breast makes an enticing Thanksgiving centerpiece and a great alternative to a whole roasted bird. This recipe, published in the Wall Street Journal, comes from Cathy Whims, chef-owner of [Nostrana](#) restaurant, in Portland, OR.

In the article accompanying the recipe, Cathy credits cookbook author and cooking teacher [Judy Witts Francini](#), a longtime resident of Tuscany, with suggesting “turchetta” as an alternative to classic roast turkey, and notes that she used Judy’s recipe as a guideline.

If you’re lucky enough to have leftovers, Cathy offers this suggestion: “Mix apple butter with a dollop of Dijon mustard, spread it on a roll, stuff the roll with sliced turchetta, and you have a very fine next-day sandwich.”

Serves 4 with leftovers

INGREDIENTS

1 boneless half turkey breast, skin on (2 to 3 pounds; 1 to 1.4 kg)
9 cloves garlic, 8 peeled and very thinly sliced, 1 unpeeled and lightly crushed
Leaves from 1 large bunch fresh sage (20 to 30 small-medium leaves)
1 tablespoon fennel seeds, ground (use a spice grinder or pound them in a mortar)
1/2 cup (40-50 g) freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (1 cup if using a microplane)
6 ounces (170 g) thinly sliced Prosciutto di Parma
5 tablespoons (75 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
1 sprig rosemary
2 cups (470 ml) red wine
1 tablespoon unsalted butter

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400° F (200° C).

2. To butterfly the breast (if you haven't gotten a butcher or meat cutter to do it for you): Lay the turkey breast out, skin-side down, on a cutting board. Use a sharp knife to make a vertical cut down the middle, only going about 2/3 of the way in. You do not want to cut it in half completely or cut to the skin.
3. Holding the blade parallel to the surface of the meat, butterfly one side by making a horizontal cut from center to edge, about halfway through the thickness of the meat, as if you are opening up the breast like a book. Do not cut all the way through the meat; stop when the meat is still attached by about 3/4 inch (2 cm) from the edge. Repeat on the other side.
4. The turkey breast should now be able to lay flat like an open book. Use a meat mallet to pound it out so its thickness is uniform, and you have a nice rectangular shape.
5. Cover the breast evenly with garlic slices; then cover the garlic evenly with sage leaves. Mix the fennel and Parmigiano together and spread this evenly on top. Layer the prosciutto slices on top of that. Roll up the breast from one narrow end to the other, leaving the skin exposed. Tie with kitchen twine to form a compact roll.
6. Pour the olive oil into a roasting pan and add the smashed garlic clove and rosemary. Set it over medium heat. Lay the rolled turkey in the pan and brown it on all sides. Pour in the wine, bring it to a simmer, and transfer the pan to the oven. Roast until the internal temperature is about 155° F (68° C), 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer the turkey to a cutting board and let it rest for 15 to 20 minutes.
7. Set the roasting pan on the stovetop over medium heat to reduce the wine and drippings to a sauce consistency if it's not already there. Whisk in the butter.
8. Carve the turkey breast crosswise into thick slices to reveal a pinwheel pattern. Serve with the pan sauce.