

CHRISTMAS LUNCH *planner*

3-4 days ahead

Make your cranberry sauce and Christmas pudding*; Cover and chill in the fridge.

Christmas Eve

Prepare the stuffing. Store one third in a covered bowl in the fridge; use the rest to make bacon-wrapped sausages and chill in a covered oven-proof dish.

Make sauce for Christmas pudding; cover and chill.

Make black tea brine* and cover turkey following your recipe and leave in the fridge until morning.

Prepare turkey stock (if making your own). Allow to cool, cover and chill.

Prepare and weigh ingredients for your **Marmite bread sauce*** if that's the recipe you've chosen.

Peel and cut potatoes and carrots; keep the potatoes covered in cold water and cover carrots with a damp cloth. Do not soak the carrots as this will dilute their flavour.

Scrub and cut your parsnips and store in a bowl using the same method as the carrots.

Take anything you have prepared in advance out of the freezer and leave in the fridge to defrost.

Chill the champagne, wine and water.

Christmas Day

9.30am

Stuff the turkey, weigh and calculate cooking time (18 minutes per 450g/1lb).

Preheat oven to Fan 170°C. Conventional 190°C/Gas 5.

10.15am

Place the turkey in the oven to roast. (timing based on a 4.5kg/10lb bird, weighed after stuffing). Cover with foil. Check and baste every hour.

Prepare red onions and squash.

10.45am

Take a break from cooking - relax and enjoy the day.

12.30pm

Cook the potatoes on the hob for about 8 minutes, the more you cook them, the fluffier the final result. Drain and give them a shake. Tip them into a large tray in one layer, and add the fat - olive oil, butter or goose fat - then season really well. Toss well, so they get completely covered in fat.

12.45pm

Uncover the turkey. 15 minutes later, pour over thyme infused oil or baste with butter and fresh thyme leaves.

Lay the table.

1.15pm

Remove turkey from oven, cover tightly with foil and leave to rest.

Drain off the juices and use to make bread sauce.

Put red onions, squash, and stuffing rolls in oven to roast.

Make gravy.

Reheat bread sauce, stirring occasionally.

Put your parsnips in to roast.

Take the cranberry sauce from the fridge and allow to warm at room temperature, this will improve the flavour.

1.30pm

Put your **Christmas pudding** on to steam.

Warm plates and serving dishes. If there is no room in the oven, place them in a sink of boiling water and dry them just before serving.

1.45pm

Cook carrots in as little water as possible so you retain their full flavour, stir fry or steam your sprouts.

2.00pm

Carve the turkey. Serve dinner, sit back and enjoy!

Tip

If you don't have a meat thermometer, pierce the thigh with a skewer and catch the juices with a spoon. The turkey is cooked if the juices are clear and golden, but if they are pink or streaked with blood, return the bird to the oven for a further 20-30 minutes, then test again.

I hope that my time plan will leave you feeling relaxed and triumphant. Have a sustainable Christmas lunch - save money and the planet by transforming your leftovers into fabulous new dishes using my Waste-ed recipes*.

Pete Redman Chef Director