



THE ART OF THE HOST

RECIPES AND
RULES FOR
FLAWLESS
ENTERTAINING

ALEX HITZ





Perfect Roast Turkey with Sherry and Giblet Gravy

Makes 12 to 15 servings

16 tablespoons (2 sticks) butter, at room temperature
3 cloves garlic, minced, plus 6 whole cloves
2 shallots, minced
1 (12-pound) turkey, fully thawed and
at room temperature
1 tablespoon plus 1¾ teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon ground black pepper
6 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
2 lemons, halved
1 medium onion, peeled and sliced into 8 wedges
2 cups white wine

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Combine the butter, minced garlic, and shallots in a medium bowl. Remove the giblets, kidneys, and neck, and set them aside in the refrigerator; they will be used later for the gravy. Place the turkey in a very large bowl, add the salt, pepper, and sage, and turn the turkey in the bowl to ensure it is completely covered with the seasonings. If there are excess seasonings at the bottom of the bowl, rub them on the turkey again, making certain that every morsel of salt, pepper, and sage is applied to the turkey.

Place the turkey in a large heavy roasting pan and squeeze the lemons over it. Reapply any seasonings that fall off. Smear the butter over the top of the turkey fully covering the top and wings. Place the squeezed lemons, the onion, and the whole garlic cloves inside the cavity, and pour the wine into the bottom of the roasting pan. Cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil, and place it in the oven.

Roast the turkey for 2½ hours, then remove it from the oven. Turn the oven up to 425°F, remove the foil, and roast the turkey for 30 to 45 minutes more, until the skin is golden brown, and the turkey reaches 155°F on a meat thermometer. Total roasting time should be approximately 15 minutes per pound. When it has reached 155°F, remove it from the oven and transfer it to a carving board. Let the turkey rest for 25 minutes before carving it.

SHERRY AND GIBLET GRAVY

Makes 2½ cups

1 large onion, chopped
The turkey giblets, kidneys, and neck, coarsely
chopped
¾ cup dry sherry
1¾ cups chicken stock

Place the roasting pan with all of its juices on the stovetop over medium-high heat. Once it's bubbling, add the onion, giblets, kidneys, and neck. Sauté them for 8 to 10 minutes, until everything starts to brown, and then add the sherry to deglaze the pan, scraping the bottom with a metal spatula or wooden spoon to capture all the browned bits. Be very thorough. Add the chicken stock, and turn the heat to high. Boil the gravy until it reduces by about one-third, 7 to 9 minutes.

Strain the sauce through a sieve into a bowl and discard the solids. Skim as much fat as you can from the reserved sauce. Spoon it generously over the carved turkey, and transfer the remaining sauce to a gravy boat to serve alongside the turkey.