



# *Holiday Roasting Guide*

# Celebrate the Holiday Season with Canadian Turkey



*The best way to celebrate the festive season is  
with Canadian turkey on the menu.*

*Let us walk you through how to prepare and  
serve your delicious roast turkey and create a new  
holiday tradition.*

*Wow your guests with delicious turkey appetizer ideas and get tips on  
what to do with leftovers.*

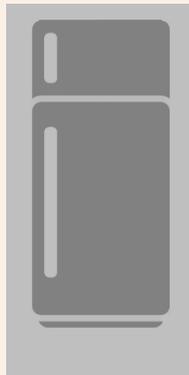
# How and When to Thaw?

The safest way to thaw frozen turkey is either in the refrigerator or in cold water. **Never thaw your turkey at room temperature!**

## REFRIGERATOR METHOD:

This method of thawing a turkey is the safest, as it keeps the meat cold until it is completely defrosted.

- Place turkey on a tray on a bottom shelf in the refrigerator.
- Allow 5 hours of thawing time per pound (10 hours/kg).



## COLD WATER METHOD:

- Keep the turkey in its original wrapping.
- In a large container, cover the turkey completely with cold water.
- Change the water at least every hour.
- Allow 1 hour of thawing time per pound (2 hours/kg).

Once thawed, keep your turkey refrigerated and cook within 48 hours.



Some products are meant to be cooked from frozen; always read the product label carefully. For more information, watch our **Turkey Basics: How to Thaw** video.

# How to Brine

Brining adds flavour and moisture to your turkey meat. The brining process – soaking a whole bird in water saturated with salt – is believed by many to be a favourable way to prepare turkey.

The brining process requires a 6-24 hour soaking period, and ideally should be done the day before roasting. The length of the soaking period will depend on the turkey, water and your own personal experience and tastes, so experiment a few times to see what works best for you.

You will need a brining bag, available in many kitchen supply stores, which is designed especially to brine poultry. Or, if not available, you will need a large enough container (food-safe plastic container or non-corrosive covered pot) to hold the turkey while submerged in brine. There needs to be sufficient room to fit it in your refrigerator.

Remember, the addition of the salt in the brining procedure will yield a salty flavour to the turkey, so it is wise to omit salt as an ingredient in the turkey stock.



# How to Cook Your Whole Turkey

**Canadian Turkey** recommends cooking a whole turkey to an internal temperature of 170°F (77°C) in the thickest part of the thigh for an unstuffed turkey and 180°F (82°C) for a stuffed turkey.

When roasting, any stuffing placed in the cavity of the bird should reach an internal temperature of at least 165°F (74°C).

Let the turkey stand for at least 20 minutes before carving.

For more information on how to roast your turkey, watch our **Turkey Basics: Roasting** video.

If a whole turkey is too much, try cooking a turkey breast roast or turkey thighs. Go to [canadianturkey.ca](http://canadianturkey.ca) for some great ideas.



# Roasting A Whole Turkey



*Cooking times may vary depending on: the temperature of the bird going into the oven; the accuracy of the oven's thermostat; how many times the oven door is opened during roasting; the type and size of roasting pan used, and, the size of the turkey in relation to the size of the oven.*

*For convection oven temperatures go to [canadianturkey.ca](http://canadianturkey.ca)*

## APPROXIMATE TIMETABLE FOR ROASTING A WHOLE TURKEY\*

Weight	Stuffed	Unstuffed
<b>6 – 8 lbs</b> (3.0 – 3.5 kg)	3 – 3 ¼ hours	2 ½ – 2 ¾ hours
<b>8 – 10 lbs</b> (3.5 – 4.5 kg)	3 ¼ – 3 ½ hours	2 ¾ – 3 hours
<b>10 – 12 lbs</b> (4.5 – 5.5 kg)	3 ½ – 3 ¾ hours	3 – 3 ¼ hours
<b>12 – 16 lbs</b> (5.5 – 7.0 kg)	3 ¾ – 4 hours	3 ¼ – 3 ½ hours
<b>16 – 20 lbs</b> (7.0 – 9.0 kg)	4 ¼ – 4 ¾ hours	3 ¾ – 4 ½ hours
<b>20 – 24 lbs</b> (9.0 – 10.9 kg)	4 ¾ – 5 ½ hours	4 – 5 hours

\*Approximate at 350°F (177°C)

# How much do I need?

Most whole turkeys (frozen or fresh) are available from your grocer or butcher in sizes ranging between 10 lbs to 25 lbs.

**TIP:** Use our [Whole Bird Calculator](#) to estimate how large a turkey you will need; how long it may take to thaw; and, how much time it will take to cook.

**TIP:** If you need a smaller turkey, be sure to ask the meat manager at your grocery store, or your butcher.

For more information on how to select your whole turkey, watch [Turkey Basics: How to Buy video](#).



# Appetizers Anyone?

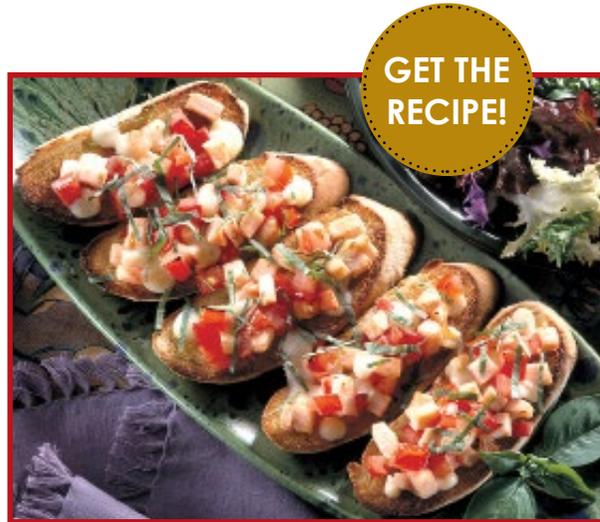
Before, during and after the holidays, appetizers are always a great starter for special occasions and get-togethers.

Here are a few tasty make-ahead appetizer ideas to try.



**Spiced Turkey Tartlets**

[www.thetiffinbox.ca](http://www.thetiffinbox.ca)



**Smoked Turkey Bruschetta**

*Turkey Farmers of Canada*



**Turkey Falafel Bites**

*Turkey Farmers of Canada*

# Continuing the Tradition

A whole roast turkey at the centre of your table is always a show stopper, right through the holidays.

Not only is turkey delicious, its lean and versatile, making it easy to adapt this Canadian tradition to any flavour profile or special gathering.

Try out these roasted turkey recipes, or go to [canadianturkey.ca/wholeturkey](http://canadianturkey.ca/wholeturkey).

GET THE  
RECIPE!



*Traditional Roast Turkey  
with Apricot and Pecan Stuffing*

GET THE  
RECIPE!



*Apple, Sage and Shallot Stuffed  
Holiday Turkey*

# What to do with Leftovers?

Turkey is versatile. After the celebration, use leftover turkey in your favourite recipes. Here are some suggestions!

Check out [canadianturkey.ca](http://canadianturkey.ca) for many more delicious recipe ideas.

GET THE  
RECIPE!



**Enchilada-style Deep Dish  
Pizza**

*Turkey Farmers of Canada*

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RECIPE!



**Harvest Soup with Herbed  
Dumplings**

*Turkey Farmers of Canada*

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**Turkey Apple & Kale Grain  
Salad**

*Turkey Farmers of Canada*

# Turkey Nutrition Facts

Turkey is **THE Power Protein** and can easily replace other meats in your favourite recipes.

Turkey is:

**Packed with protein.** Each 100-gram serving has about 30 grams of high-quality protein to help you feel energized and satisfied, and to help keep your muscles healthy and happy.



**Lean.** Both light meat and dark meat are lean choices. Turkey breast is actually extra-lean, with 3 grams of fat per 100-gram serving. Dark meat is lean, with just 8 grams of fat per the same serving size.

**Naturally low in sodium.** All fresh cuts of turkey are low in sodium, so eating turkey is a natural way to keep your sodium intake low.

**A Nutritional Powerhouse.** Turkey has a whole lot of health-boosting nutrients per calorie, such as iron (to deliver oxygen through your body), zinc (for a healthy immune system) and selenium (an antioxidant mineral). Dark meat is especially rich in these nutrients.

Find out more at [canadianturkey.ca/nutrition](https://canadianturkey.ca/nutrition).

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