

Dry Brined, Lemon & Herb Roasted Turkey with Gravy

Recommended Pairing: 2018 Coastview Vineyard Chardonnay and 2016 Lester Family Vineyard Pinot Noir

Savory, roasted turkey pairs perfectly with Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Both are wines with brisk acidity, which is necessary to cut through the rich flavors and keep you palate refreshed and ready to taste more! Both of these wines also mirror certain flavor profiles in the dish. The Coastview Chardonnay brings plentiful citrus notes to enhance the lemon zest flavors and the Lester Pinot Noir brings great earth herbal notes to complement the thyme and sage seasoning. The Lester Pinot Noir also have fine, but firm tannins- enough to handle the fatty texture of the gravy while not overpowering the leaner cuts of the bird.

Dry brine:

1/3 c kosher salt

1 T sugar

1 T ground pepper

2 tsp dried thyme

Compound butter:

2 sticks salted butter, softened

4 cloves garlic, minced

Zest of one lemon

1 T each chopped herbs of your choice

(recommend thyme, rosemary and sage)

1 tsp ground pepper

Turkey:

14-16 lb turkey

1 lemon (left over from zesting)

1 onion

1 head of garlic

2 sprigs each of rosemary, thyme and sage

Gravy:

Neck & giblets from turkey

8 c of chicken stock

1 onion, cut in quarters

1 head of garlic, cut in half width-wise

2 sprigs each of rosemary, thyme and sage

1 T whole black peppercorns

1/2 c fat (either butter or drippings from cooked turkey)

1/2 c flour

Bird must be thawed before brining. If frozen, place in refrigerator at least 3 days ahead of time. Remove neck and giblets (reserve for gravy), rinse and dry bird. Rub dry brine mixture all over the turkey and inside the cavity. Put on a rimmed baking sheet and refrigerate overnight or at least 8 hours. Day of cooking, rinse turkey well and pat dry.

Take softened butter and mix in all compound ingredients. Rub all over outside of bird, under skin on breast and inside cavity. Reserve any extra for gravy. Cut lemon, onion and garlic head into pieces that will fit in cavity. Insert in cavity along with fresh herb sprigs. Tuck the wings underneath the bird and place on lowest level of the oven at 500°F. Roast for 30 minutes and then reduce temperature to 350°F. You may place a triangular piece of foil over breast meat if it is beginning to brown too much, but the initial high temperature will tighten the skin so that it gets crispy while the bird remains moist. Cook until internal temperature reaches 165°F (about 2 hours). Remove and let the turkey rest, loosely covered with foil for 15 minutes before carving.

Gravy: While the turkey is cooking, brown neck and giblets in medium sized saucepan. Once browned, add 8 cups of chicken broth, onion, garlic, herbs and whole peppercorns and let simmer, covered the duration of the turkey cooking time. Once the turkey has been removed from the oven and is resting, you can complete the gravy. You will need 1/2 cup of fat- if there is more than this in the bottom of the turkey pan, pour out excess. If you need more fat, use leftover compound butter or plain butter. Once fat is melted, add 1/2 c of flour and stir until golden brown. Strain the broth, and slowly add it to the roasting pan, stirring constantly and scraping up the brown bits. Let simmer until thickened to your desired consistency. You can strain the gravy if needed. Taste for flavor and adjust seasoning if needed.