

Quick and Easy Thanksgiving Dinner

First the stuffing. We all have times that our bread products are not used up before they get stale. I am not talking about moldy just dry or not fresh. DON'T throw it away. This includes muffins, bread, hamburger or hotdog rolls anything that is a bread product. Put it in a gallon storage bag and freeze it. YUP! Then when you have a two or more bags full of left over bread, take it out let it thaw just a little, cut it in cubes about 1 inch in size. Put it in a large bowl with enough oil of choice to coat, I use olive oil since it gives a nice light nutty flavor and is really good for you. Lay the cubes on large cookie sheets and place in preheated oven at 275 degree. Cook slowly turning every 20 to 30 minutes until it is golden brown. Let cool place back into the storage bags and then back in the freezer. You now have yummy, healthy stuffing mix for use at anytime you want for any type of dish. Since there is no seasoning on it you can use for bread puddings, stuffings or whatever your imagination comes up with.

Now for the dinner.

For my turkey dinner I like to play with ingredients for my stuffing. I am a sweet loving person so here is what I use:

1 to 2 Apples of any kind peeled and cubed

1/2 to 1 cup Craisins (either original or some flavored like blueberry, pomegranate or raspberry),

1/2 to 1 cup Walnuts or other nuts (if there is a nut allergy in the family leave em out),

2 to 3 stalk celery cut into bite sized pieces,

1/2 to 1 onion cut in small pieces,

1 teaspoon ground sage,

1 teaspoon cinnamon,

1 tablespoon butter

1 cup chicken broth, 1/2 to 1 cup water. Basically what ever you and your family like to have. Depending on the number of people feeding 2 to 4 cups of fresh stuffing cubes.

Melt butter in frying pan, add apples, onion, celery salt and pepper to taste and cook to desired doneness. I like to make my onions a little darker than most but what ever floats your boat and what you and your family like.

Remember cooking is not an exact science have fun with it.

Next add the broth and stuffing cubes. Mix well and if needed add water a little at a time until moist but not soggy. Put in preheated oven to 325 degrees and bake until crispy but not to dry.

The Turkey

Now in some stores you can uncooked turkey breast anytime of the year but legs, wings and thighs are available all the time. If you are not in a rush you can cook your turkey from scratch using any type of seasoning and glaze you like following the instructions on the package. If you are short on time stores have precooked breasts and sometimes legs in the hot bar that just need to be kept warm. This is what I usually do since we are white meat lovers. If you really want to go all out you can make potatoes and a vegetable as a side but the stuffing has vegetables, fruit and starch already and makes a very filling meal. I am not a very good gravy maker so I always try to keep a jar of Homestyle gravy on hand that just needs to be heated up for meals like this.

I hope this gives you a quick, easy and inexpensive way to enjoy the smells and flavors of Thanksgiving any time of the year. ENJOY!!