

Thanksgiving Options with Chef Robert Alimirzaie



TURKEY TIPS FROM CHEF ROBERT:

- defrost in the refrigerator
- let the turkey defrost in a deeper pan so turkey juice is contained and the bird is not in it's own juices.
- in the refrigerator the skin will dry out a bit, which creates a crispier skin when cooking
- rub the surface of the turkey with butter, and push butter under the skin. Only lift skin the neck end...it may tear from the other end and then pulls away and causes the meat to dry out.
- tuck in the wings
- don't open the oven more than necessary
- cook slow and low for juicy meat
- let it rest before carving

Potato and squash medley

Ingredients

- 3 Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into small wedges
- 2 medium sweet red peppers, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 small butternut squash, peeled and cubed
- 1 medium sweet potato, peeled and cubed
- 1 medium red onion, cut into wedges
- 3 tablespoons Olive Oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary *or* 2 teaspoons dried rosemary, crushed
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme *or* 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

Directions

Preheat oven to 425°. In a large bowl, combine potatoes, red peppers, squash, sweet potato and onion.

In a small bowl, whisk oil, vinegar and seasonings. Pour over vegetables and toss to coat.

Transfer to two greased 15x10x1-in. baking pans. Bake, uncovered, 30-40 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Yield: 7 servings.

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Barberry Rice

1 Cup barberry (cleaned to pick out any small pebbles)
1 Tablespoon sugar
1 Cup chopped onion
1 Teaspoon crushed saffron in 2 tablespoons of hot water
1 Tablespoon turmeric
2 Cups Basmati rice
2 Tablespoons butter or vegetable oil
1 Tablespoon salt
2 Cups water

Barberry

1. In the mean time, pick the dried barberries, wash and rinse (before washing make sure to thoroughly go through the barberry looking for small pebbles and thorns)
2. Add butter/oil to a small pan, once melted add the barberry, 1 tablespoon of liquid saffron and 1 tablespoon of sugar. Cook for 3-5 minutes. Set aside.

Rice

I cook my rice in a traditional Persian rice cooker which creates the burnt rice (tah-deeg) on the bottom. For cooking in a rice cooker:

1. Wash rice and let soak for a few hour (I don't like to rinse the rice as most of the vitamins added to rice is washed away in the process).
2. For each 1 cup of rice add twice the amount of water.
3. Add 1 tablespoon of oil and 1 tablespoon of butter.
4. Turn the knob to the crispiness level of the burn rice and allow to cook. It is quite a simple process and results in some of the best rice.
5. Once the boiling water has made its way into the rice grain add 1 tablespoon of the saffron water.

Bourbon Cranberry Sauce

3 cups cranberries
1/2 cup honey
1/2 cup bourbon
1 vanilla bean
2 jalapenos, whole or finely chopped

Combine ingredients in a medium saucepan. While stirring, bring the mixture to a boil. Turn down the heat and simmer for approximately 5 minutes, or until most of the cranberries have burst.

Remove from heat to cool. If you left the jalapeno pepper whole, remove it now and discard. Retrieve the vanilla bean from the sauce and set aside. When the vanilla bean is cool enough to handle comfortably, split it in half and scrape the seeds into the sauce. Stir until the vanilla seeds are distributed throughout the sauce. Discard the remaining hull.

Form 1/2 goat cheese and 1/2 cream cheese mixture in the mould of your choice (line mould with plastic wrap, press cheese mixture in, chill well, then remove and unwrap) Top with cranberry mixture

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