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THANKSGIVING DINNER DISASTER? SOLVE IT AT EPICURIUS.COM

Undercooked Turkey, Lumpy Mashed Potatoes, and Burned Side Dishes Transformed Into Delicious Turkey Day Dinners

NEW YORK, November 5, 2007 – Epicurious.com, the leading food and recipe Web site, is your destination for Thanksgiving recipes, menus, wine pairings, equipment essentials, shopping lists, timelines, videos on topics like how to brine and carve turkeys, and, perhaps most important, solutions to Turkey Day kitchen dilemmas. Whether it's your first time cooking Thanksgiving dinner or you're an old hand faced with a last-minute problem, Epicurious.com has all of the answers and inspiration you need. Here are editor-in-chief Tanya Steel's quick solutions to the five most common Thanksgiving cooking mishaps:

1) Dry, bland turkey: Many turkeys are injected with a saline solution, but these birds can lack flavor and firmness. Epicurious.com recommends buying a fresh turkey labeled "all natural." Brining your bird at home infuses the turkey with moisture and makes it delicious. Watch Epicurious' brining video to get simple instructions on how to do this. And when the turkey goes in the oven, cover the breast tightly with foil for the first few hours to keep it from drying out.

- **SOLUTION:** If the turkey comes out dry, you don't have to resign yourself to serving it to your guests that way. Take drippings from the pan, add several cans of chicken broth, and bring to a boil. Carve the turkey and pour the broth mixture into a large casserole dish. Place the carved turkey pieces without the skin into the dish and baste with the liquid. Cover with foil and heat in the oven 5-10 minutes before serving
- **SOLUTION:** Letting the turkey stand for 30 minutes after it comes out of the oven is an essential part of the roasting process because it gives juices time to redistribute themselves for a moister turkey.

2) Forgot to put the turkey in the oven, forgot to turn the oven on, or turned it on too late:

- **SOLUTION:** Your turkey will cook much faster if you cut it up and increase the surface area exposed to the heat. Cut it into wings, legs, and breasts and bake in a large, rimmed baking sheet at 375°F.
- **SOLUTION:** Alternatively, cut up the turkey and grill or deep-fry it. Epicurious.com has recipes and videos demonstrating these techniques as well as a guide to cooking "deconstructed" turkey.

3) Lumpy mashed potatoes:

- **SOLUTION:** Run the potatoes through a food mill or fine-mesh strainer once or put back in the pot, add a tablespoon of butter and a tablespoon of milk, and continue to mash and warm.
- **SOLUTION:** The choice of potato also makes a difference. Russets tend to stay creamier, while Yukon Golds are prone to lumps. If your potatoes come out lumpy, you can mix in melted butter and buttermilk (or plain whole milk) after the fact to soften the

texture. Another tip is to heat the milk before you add it, because the starch in the potatoes will clump together from the cold milk.

4) Burned or overcooked an important dish:

- **SOLUTION:** If you've burned or overcooked an ingredient, you don't necessarily have to start over. If a vegetable is becoming overcooked, place the pot or pan in an ice bath to stop the cooking process. Ask yourself if the burned item could go into another dish—burned potatoes or overcooked green beans can become an au gratin dish. Merely scrape off the burned bits, sprinkle shredded cheese or bread crumbs on top, and place under the broiler for a few minutes to melt or brown.
- **SOLUTION:** Desserts are more difficult to salvage. At Epicurious.com, we recommend you buy a dessert at the supermarket as a backup or in addition to one you're cooking.

5) Cooking stuffing inside the turkey can help keep the bird moist, but can stuffing prepared this way make people sick?

- **SOLUTION:** Warm, moist stuffing is an optimal environment for bacteria such as salmonella or E. coli to multiply. Make the stuffing at the last minute so it can go into the bird warm. This helps to move it more quickly above the optimal temperature range for bacteria growth during roasting. When you remove the turkey from the oven, check the temperature in the middle of the stuffing with an instant-read thermometer to make sure it's at least 165°F, the temperature at which bacteria will be killed. If it's not 165°F, scoop the stuffing out of the cavity and microwave it. To bake additional stuffing outside the bird, drizzle ¼ cup of extra chicken or turkey stock on top before you put it in the oven. Cover with foil for the first 30 minutes or so, then uncover for the remaining 30 minutes to brown the top.

If you have a Thanksgiving cooking crisis, or simply need some questions answered, Epicurious.com will host a live chat with renowned cookbook author Melissa Clark from noon to 2 p.m. EST on Friday, November 16. Cooking expert Rick Rodgers will answer your questions on the site's blog, the epi-log, from November 1 through November 21.

For more information, including Thanksgiving guides, recipes, menus, shopping lists, timelines, cooking videos, and more, please visit <http://www.epicurious.com>. Stories include a "Beginner's Guide" to Thanksgiving dinner, "Thanksgiving with a Twist" for sophisticated cooks, "Meatless Mains" for a vegetarian Thanksgiving, and much more. Tabs within stories lead to timelines and shopping lists to better prepare for a delicious and relatively stress-free holiday dinner.

About Epicurious.com:

Epicurious.com is an award-winning food Web site from CondéNet. It incorporates more than 25,000 professionally tested recipes from the premier brands in food journalism, *Gourmet* and *Bon Appétit* magazines, as well as Web-exclusive original recipes from top chefs and cookbook authors around the world. It also contains over 35,000 member-submitted recipes. Epicurious offers a wealth of articles and tips focused on cooking, entertaining, wine, cocktails, and shopping.