Recipe for Roasted Heritage Turkey

By Sandra Kay Miller (source www.localharvest.org/features/cooking-turkeys.jsp)

Besides the fact that most old fashion Heritage turkeys are also raised the old fashioned way -- with plenty of grass and sunshine -- they need to be cooked quite differently than their modern, factory-farmed counterparts. This tried and true recipe (which serves 10-12 people) will make the best of your Heritage bird this year.

Ingredients:
- 15-pound fresh heritage turkey at room temperature
- Kosher or sea salt & fresh ground pepper
- 4 cups giblet broth (see recipe below)
- Rosemary Maple Butter (see recipe below)
- Oiled parchment paper

Directions:
1. Rub turkey inside and out with salt and pepper.
2. Loosen the skin around the breast with your fingers and insert Rosemary Maple Butter between the meat and the skin as well as on the inside of the bird's cavity.
3. Set bird in deep roasting pan. Use a wire rack to lift the bird off the bottom of the pan.
4. Add the giblet broth to the bottom of the pan. Using a sheet of oiled parchment paper, tent the roasting pan with the oiled parchment paper. Any type of cooking oil can be used. Brush it on both sides with a pastry brush. The parchment paper is easily affixed to the roasting pan with a strip of foil on each end or you can use clean, oiled wooden clothespins. Remove parchment paper and the last 30 minutes of cooking to develop a crispy, golden skin.
5. Pre-heat oven to 425F-450F. Roast the bird until the thigh temperature reaches 140F-150F. Let the bird rest 10-15 minutes before carving to let the juices settle.
A word about basting
Quick roasting at high temperatures means the oven temperature needs to be maintained and frequent basting defeats that purpose. By adding butter under the skin, the bird is self-basted. Baste the bird when you remove the parchment tent. If there is not enough liquid for basting, add either more water or wine.

Giblet Broth
- 2 cups white wine (a deep, oaky chardonnay lends a wonder taste)
- 2 cups water
- Giblets & neck
- Bay leaf

Simmer everything in a small saucepan for 15 minutes. Discard bay leaf and neck. Giblets can be discarded if they aren’t your type of thing or they can be finely chopped and added to the broth.

Rosemary Maple Butter
- 1/2 pound butter
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon fresh minced rosemary

Bring butter to room temperature and whip all ingredients together.

Sandra Kay Miller raises pastured heritage turkeys on her farm in Pennsylvania. She owned a catering business, a deli and was a chef for a historic hot springs restaurant in southern California. Sandra has contributed to several cookbooks and frequently wrote for the Los Angeles Times Food Section. Her goal is to now raise the quality of food she has had the fortunate opportunity to be exposed to over the last 25 years. Sandra is listed at LocalHarvest.org under Painted Hand Farm in Newburg, PA.