

Turkey Roasted on a Baking Steel

I must confess that I love gadgets. The newer and the more technically designed to take advantage of advances in the science of cooking the better. I recently purchased a cooking steel (from Bakingsteel.com) to use instead of a pizza stone to bake pizzas, bread etc. The science is that the steel holds the heat in a more concentrated manner and therefore bakes whatever is on it more quickly and evenly. It does in fact work great.

Just before Thanksgiving, I received an email from them touting their new experimental turkey, roasted on top of the steel. They had me at “experimental”. I was in. It looked beautiful and tasted wonderful and was cooked in a remarkably short time because besides taking advantage of the heat of the steel, it also roasted on a cookie sheet instead of a roasting pan, allowing the heat to permeate the turkey without the interference of the sides of a pan.

The following is their recipe with some adjustments of my own. You can visit the website for this recipe to read the full explanation and see their beautiful photos.

<http://www.bakingsteel.com/blog/roasting-turkey-on-the-baking-steel>

15 lbs Turkey (living on the farm preferably) **(I used a 14 pound turkey-I think that is why it was a little over temp. at the end of the cooking time-next time I will use a 15 pounder.)**

2 gal [Poultry Brine](#) (see Chef Thomas Kellers recipe) **(To save refrigerator space, I used a dry brine for 2 days lightly covered and uncovered for 1 day ahead-I might try the wet brine next time.)**

3 ea apples, quartered

2 ea oranges, sliced

2 ea squashes, sliced in rounds

2 lbs carrots, rough chopped

2 ea vidalia onions, large dice

1 ea red onion, large dice

1 ea leek, large dice

2 ea heads garlic, sliced crosswise

1 bunch celery, washed and diced large

2 ea large parsnips, large dice

1 ea bunch parsley, thyme, rosemary and sage

Salt and Pepper

1 lb. butter, soft (room temp)

Procedure

1. For the brine, dissolve all of your salt, sugar and spices in 1 gallon of water. Once dissolved, add ice to cool rapidly and cover with enough water to make entire solution about 2 gallons. Pour cool brine over turkey. Put a couple plates on top incase the bird tries to escape. Throw a lid on top and wait until tomorrow.
2. Drain brine off turkey and let air dry. At this point, you can start to prepare all of your vegetables. Pre-Heat your oven to 450 degrees.
3. Make sure all of your vegetables are washed and dried. No need to peel your parsnips or carrots here, just rinse them. Soak your leeks to get the dirt/sand out of them. Remove outer dry skin of onions. Toss all of your fruits, vegetables and herbs in olive oil, salt and pepper and set aside.
4. With a heavy hand, season the bird inside and out with a generous amount of salt and pepper. Then take your pound of softened butter and smear across the top part of the breast of the bird. Set aside.
5. On a normal baking sheet, spread a hefty mix of your veg/fruit/herb wonderfulness around. Place a normal resting rack on top. Use remainder of your veg to stuff in the cavity of the bird (makes it even more delicious.)
6. Place your hefty, well seasoned and stuffed bird on top of the roasting rack and slide on top of your Baking Steel inside your oven. 450 degrees. 30 minutes. You want that golden brown color to start forming. After 30minutes, open oven, rotate and baste. Close it up and turn oven down to 350 degrees.
7. Baste every 30 minutes and rotate. 2 hours in total at 30 minutes should take your legs to an internal temperature of 150 degrees. DON'T FREAK OUT! your bird will continue to cook to upwards of 165 degrees. NO ONE WILL GET SICK! Large meats carry over significantly and you don't want a dry bird after all of this love that you've put into it.
8. Resting time will be about 20-30 minutes. Your bird will still be warm to serve, trust me. Slice your breast, tear away you legs, enjoy your day. Follow us this week to see what else you can do with your turkey.

(I drained the juices into a fat separator and added them to the gravy. I didn't serve the cooked veggies/fruit but they looked delicious-Next time I will serve them as well.)