

Thanksgiving 2024

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Sauces & Sides

Smoked Turkey Gravy

Title: Smoked Turkey Gravy Recipe

Category: Thanksgiving / Sauces

Tags: Gravy, Turkey, Thanksgiving, Drippings, Smoked

Overview

This smoky, herbaceous gravy is the perfect complement to a smoked turkey. Made from drippings, it captures all the richness and flavor of your turkey.

Ingredients

- Drippings from turkey pan
 - 2 cups chicken or turkey broth
 - 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
 - 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour (or tapioca starch for paleo)
 - 1/4 cup dry white wine (optional)
 - 1 teaspoon fresh thyme, finely chopped
 - 1 teaspoon fresh sage, finely chopped
 - Salt and pepper, to taste
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Instructions

- 1. Collect Drippings:**
Strain turkey drippings to remove solids. Skim off excess fat if preferred.
 - 2. Make a Roux:**
Melt butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add flour and whisk continuously for 2-3 minutes until golden and smooth.
 - 3. Deglaze and Mix:**
 - Pour in the white wine (optional), whisking constantly.
 - Slowly add the drippings and broth, continuing to whisk for smooth consistency.
 - 4. Season and Simmer:**
Add thyme and sage. Simmer for 10-15 minutes, stirring often, until the gravy thickens. Adjust salt and pepper to taste.
 - 5. Serve:**
Serve hot over turkey or mashed potatoes.
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Tips

- **Thickening:** If too thin, whisk in a cornstarch slurry (1 tablespoon cornstarch + 2 tablespoons water).
- **Depth of Flavor:** Use smoked paprika or black garlic for added complexity.

Turkey Spritz Mixture

Title: Turkey Spritz Mixture Recipe

Category: Thanksgiving / Smoked Recipes

Tags: Turkey, Spritz, Thanksgiving, Smoker, Herbs

Overview

This broth, butter, and herb mixture enhances the flavor and moisture of smoked turkey during cooking. It ensures even browning and adds a savory, aromatic layer of flavor.

Ingredients

- 1 cup chicken or turkey broth
 - 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
 - 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, chopped
 - 1 teaspoon fresh rosemary, chopped
 - 1/2 teaspoon fresh oregano, chopped
 - 1/2 teaspoon fresh sage, chopped
 - 1 tablespoon apple cider (optional, for a slight tang)
 - 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
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Instructions

- Combine Ingredients:**
In a small saucepan, mix the broth, melted butter, and herbs. Add apple cider if desired for a tangy note.
 - Heat Mixture:**
Warm over low heat to meld flavors without boiling.
 - Strain (Optional):**
Strain the mixture if your spritz bottle might clog from the herbs.
 - Use in Smoker:**
Spritz the turkey every 45 minutes during the smoking process. Focus on areas like the skin and exposed meat.
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Tips

- **Storage:** Keep warm if using a glass spritz bottle or reheat as needed.

- **Flavor Boost:** Add a pinch of smoked paprika or chili flakes for subtle heat.

Cool Whip Pineapple Cheese Fluff

Title: Cool Whip Pineapple Cheese Fluff

Category: Desserts / Side Dishes

Tags: Cool Whip, Pineapple, Cheese, Jello, Easy Recipe

Overview

A quick and delicious treat perfect for any occasion! This Cool Whip Pineapple Cheese Fluff combines creamy, sweet, and tangy flavors for a dish everyone will love.

Ingredients

- 1 container (8 oz) Cool Whip (thawed)
 - 1 cup cottage cheese
 - 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
 - 1 can (20 oz) crushed pineapple (drained)
 - 1 package (3 oz) flavored gelatin (Jello) of your choice
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Instructions

1. **Mix the Base:** In a large mixing bowl, combine the cottage cheese and gelatin powder until evenly blended.
2. **Add Pineapple:** Stir in the drained crushed pineapple.
3. **Fold in Cool Whip:** Gently fold in the Cool Whip until the mixture is smooth and creamy.
4. **Incorporate Cheese:** Add the shredded cheddar cheese and mix thoroughly.
5. **Chill:** Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours to set and enhance the flavor.
6. **Serve:** Serve chilled and enjoy!



Pro Tips

- **Jello Variety:** Experiment with different Jello flavors like strawberry, lime, or orange for fun variations.
- **Extra Texture:** Add mini marshmallows or chopped nuts for a delightful crunch.
- **Occasions:** Perfect for potlucks, holiday gatherings, or as a quick dessert.

Smoked Spatchcock Turkey Recipe with Overnight Brine

Title: Smoked Spatchcock Turkey Recipe with Overnight Brine

Category: Thanksgiving / Smoked Recipes

Tags: Turkey, Spatchcock, Smoker, Thanksgiving, Brine

Overview

This recipe uses an overnight brine for maximum flavor and moisture, followed by smoking at a low temperature and finishing with a high-temperature roast for tender meat and crispy skin.

Ingredients

Brine (Optional):

You can use a high-quality store-bought brine mix for convenience or try this homemade recipe for a rich, aromatic flavor:

Homemade Brine Recipe:

- 1 gallon water
- 1 cup kosher salt
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons whole black peppercorns
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried rosemary
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 orange, sliced

(Follow the instructions to dissolve the salt and sugar in water, then chill before use.)

Turkey & Prep:

- 1 whole turkey (small, about 10–12 lbs)
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- Olive oil or melted butter (for skin)

Herb Pan for Smoking:

- 3-4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2-3 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 2 teaspoons oregano
- 4-5 fresh sage leaves
- 1 cup chicken or turkey broth (optional)

Spritz Mixture:

(See the [Turkey Spritz Mixture](#) recipe for details)

Gravy:

(See the [Smoked Turkey Gravy](#) recipe for details)

Equipment

- Traeger Pro 780 or similar smoker
 - Poultry shears (for spatchcocking)
 - Probe thermometer (Traeger probe for the thigh)
 - Spritz bottle
 - Pan for herbs and drippings
 - Pot of water for added moisture in the smoker
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Instructions

1. Prepare the Brine:

- Combine all brine ingredients in a large stockpot. Stir until salt and sugar are dissolved.
- Submerge the turkey in the brine and refrigerate overnight (8-12 hours).

2. Post-Brine Prep:

- Remove the turkey from the brine. Rinse thoroughly with cold water and pat dry.
- Let the turkey air dry in the refrigerator for 1-2 hours to promote crispy skin.

3. Spatchcock the Turkey:

- Use poultry shears to remove the backbone.
- Press down firmly on the breastbone to flatten the bird.
- Season with kosher salt, black pepper, and olive oil or melted butter.

4. Set Up the Smoker:

- Preheat the smoker to **165°F**.

- Place a pot of water and a pan with herbs (thyme, rosemary, oregano, sage) under the grill grates.

5. Smoke the Turkey:

- Smoke the spatchcocked turkey at **165°F** for 3 hours. Spritz every 45 minutes with the broth, butter, and herb mixture.

6. Roast to Finish:

- Increase the smoker temperature to **375°F**.
- Monitor the turkey using the Traeger probe in the thigh and a handheld probe thermometer for the breast.
- Cook until the thigh reaches **175°F** and the breast reaches **160°F**.

7. Rest and Serve:

- Remove the turkey from the smoker and let it rest, loosely tented with foil, for 20-30 minutes.
- Carve and serve with smoked gravy.

Photography Milestones

1. **Preparing the Brine:** Capture the brine ingredients and mixture.
2. **Turkey in the Brine:** Photograph the turkey fully submerged.
3. **Post-Brine Rinse:** Snap a shot of the rinsed and dried turkey.
4. **Cutting the Backbone:** Show the action of removing the backbone.
5. **Flattened Turkey:** Photograph the fully spatchcocked, seasoned bird.
6. **Pre-Smoker Setup:** Document the turkey on the smoker rack with herbs below.
7. **Mid-Cook Check:** Capture the turkey's progress in the smoker.
8. **Temperature Check:** Photograph the thermometer readings.
9. **Resting:** Show the turkey resting under foil.
10. **Carved and Plated:** Photograph the finished meal for presentation.

Tips

- **Skin Crisping:** Pat the skin dry before roasting.
- **Flavor Boost:** Add citrus slices or onions to the herb pan for extra aroma.
- **Resting Time:** Allow a full 30 minutes for best results.

Timeline

1. **Day Before:** Prepare and brine the turkey overnight.
2. **Morning Of:** Spatchcock and season the turkey.

3. **Smoking:** Smoke at 165°F, spritzing every 45 minutes.
 4. **Roasting:** Increase to 375°F and monitor temps closely.
 5. **Resting:** Allow 20–30 minutes before carving.
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Related Recipes

- [Turkey Spritz Mixture](#)
 - [Smoked Turkey Gravy](#)
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Let me know if you'd like anything else added or edited!