

# *What to expect?*

This guide includes a detailed checklist of **what** to do and **when** to do it! Key points can make all the difference between the perfect Christmas and a cold roast dinner made by a **very** stressed cook. Of course, everyone's Christmas menu is different, so the timings below for *your* actual day might need to be adapted and expanded upon. However, my guide is put together based on a dinner served at **2pm** with a **5kg stuffed turkey**, but **ALWAYS** check your meat is cooked with a thermometer for proper peace of mind.

Just remember what I teach all my staff are the **5 P's**

**Perfect Preparation Prevents Poor Performance!**



# *Throughout December*

So, December is here, shops are full of festive treats, carols are playing... it's time to get your head in the game!

**First**, make sure your turkey is ordered from the butcher, along with any other special items.

Start stocking up on alcohol, taking advantage of deals where you can find them. We all know Christmas runs a lot smoother when everyone's a little 'Merry'.

If you're doing an online grocery shop, book your delivery slot as far in advance as possible to avoid any last-minute dashes to the supermarket! It's dangerous out there.

Finally, make and freeze things like mince pies and sausage rolls, which you can then bake from frozen for unexpected guests.



# *One week before*

The clock is ticking, but there is no need to be stressed. Now is the time to go Christmas food shopping and start picking up all the dry goods you'll need until the shops are open again after Boxing Day.

Make sure you're not missing any **vital cookware** and have enough plates, glasses, etc. it will be too late if you realise on the 25th!

If you are cooking a frozen turkey, take it out of the freezer a **few days before** to defrost in the fridge.

**On the Saturday 22nd or Sunday 23rd, buy all the fresh produce you need.**



# Christmas Eve

They say that nothing 'nothing was stirring', however...

Do as much Preparation Christmas eve as possible to make it easier for you Christmas Day

Make your stuffing, then wrap it and store in the fridge.

Peel, boil and fluff up the potatoes in advance for tomorrow, then cover and keep in the fridge.

Do as much preparation for tomorrow as possible – any vegetables which will discolour in the air can be kept in water. It's a good idea to parboil sprouts, then chill and finish them off in a frying pan just before serving.

Make a checklist of the different things you need to do tomorrow with timings, so you don't forget the cranberry sauce or to warm the plates.



# *Christmas Day*

It's Here! First thing? **Don't panic!** Your only mission should be to **enjoy the day** with your family and friends

**8am** – Take your turkey and stuffing out of the fridge so that it can come to room temperature.

**9.30am** – Preheat the oven and rub the turkey with butter or oil and season. Fill with the stuffing.

**10am** – Place the turkey in the oven, remembering to baste regularly throughout the cooking time and to cover in foil if needed.

**11am** – Set the table. Do any remaining prep, such as peeling or chopping.

**12pm** – Put your Christmas pudding on to steam, which should take three hours.

**1pm** – Remove the turkey from the oven and make sure it's cooked through. Cover tightly and leave to rest, then drain and deglaze the juices to make gravy. Turn up the

heat and put roasting trays full of oil or goose fat in the oven to warm up.

**1.15pm** – Place the potatoes in the hot oil or fat and make sure they're completely covered, then return to the oven. Do the same with any other roast vegetables, depending on size.

**1.30pm** – Place the pigs in blankets in the oven, then keep warm if they cook through in less than 30 minutes. Boil the water for the vegetables.

**1.40pm** – Begin boiling and stir frying the remaining vegetables, keeping an eye on what's in the oven. Make sure your gravy is ready and keep warm. Begin heating through any other sauces.

**1.50pm** – Start sautéing the Brussels sprouts with chestnuts and bacon. Warm plates and serving bowls ready for the table. Open the wine.

**2pm** – Grab anyone you can to help carry food through to the Christmas dinner table. **Eat, drink and be merry!**

**3pm** – Remove the Christmas pudding from the heat and serve with lots of brandy butter.

Just remember if you have done  
all the cooking relax put your feet,  
pour a large drink... and **let the  
others clean up!**

*Merry Christmas*

*From Paul Tritton – Head Chef at Forrester  
Park*

*Ps. For a price I will always come round and  
cook your Christmas dinner for you!*



# *How to cook a turkey*

1 Free Range Turkey (5kg will feed 8)

50g butter

Seasoning

Heat oven to **180C/160C** fan/gas 4.

Smear butter all over the turkey and season all over with salt and pepper.

Put in a roasting tin, breast side up, and roast for **40** mins per kilo for the first **4** kilos then **45** mins for every kilo over that weight, or until the internal temperature reaches **65-70C**. For a turkey of this weight, the cooking time should be **3½-4hrs**. The turkey will continue to cook, and the temperature will rise more while it rests.

Remove the turkey from the oven and rest in a warm place for **30-45** mins, don't skip this step as the juices won't be reabsorbed back into the turkey and will run out if you carve it straightaway. Don't cover the turkey too tightly if you want the skin to stay crisp but keep it warm.

Before serving your turkey, check that the meat is steaming hot throughout, there is no pink meat visible and when you cut into the thickest part of the meat, the juices run clear.

For accurate timing, always weigh your turkey after it has been stuffed. If it's very large, you may need to use bathroom scales.