

## James' Turkey Stuffing

This recipe is a guideline – feel free to substitute ingredients or proportions. This should make enough stuffing for a 16-pounder but is equally good baked outside of the bird.

1 loaf firm white bread, cubed and dried several hours in a warm oven or overnight on the counter. (I like Grand Central's Ciabatta or Como)

1 package prepared cornbread stuffing mix (don't add seasonings if a packet is enclosed)

¾ to 1 lb sweet Italian sausage, casing removed

1 apple – peeled, cored, diced. (Braeburn, Granny Smith work well)

1 stick butter, melted

1 large onion, small dice

1 - 2 cups diced celery

1 – 2 cloves garlic, minced

1 - 8 oz. package sliced, fresh mushrooms

1 cup chopped fresh parsley

2 eggs, lightly beaten

1 qt. Low-salt chicken broth

Poultry seasoning, oregano, thyme, savory, sage - in any combination

Salt to taste – use sparingly if stuffing a brined bird.

Freshly ground pepper to taste

Slightly undercook ingredients – they will finish cooking in the bird or in the casserole dish.

Melt butter and set aside to cool slightly. Put bread in large mixing bowl and moisten with chicken broth.

Crumble sausage into large skillet and sauté until cooked through and lightly browned. Remove sausage and reserve in large mixing bowl. Remove fat from pan if more than a tablespoon. Add onions, mushrooms, garlic and celery to skillet and sauté until onions look a bit transparent. Scrape onions, mushrooms, garlic, celery and any darkened bits of sausage into mixing bowl.

Add apple, parsley, melted butter, and eggs. Add generous amounts of herbs and seasonings to taste. Mix well after all additions. Test for moisture and add more chicken broth if needed. Stuffing should clump together slightly but not be soggy.

This stuffing does not seem to expand too much when cooked so you can pack it moderately firmly in the bird's cavities. You can insert a large spoon or fork into the center of the stuffing to conduct heat to bake the interior stuffing thoroughly. To bake in a casserole dish sprinkle a little more broth over the stuffing, cover with foil and bake at 350 degrees for an hour, removing the foil for the last 15 minutes.