

A CHRISTMAS GOOSE

THE
Cookbook Collector



The magical Christmas Season means different things to many people. In my family it is about sharing with family and friends, the making of memories and celebrating with family traditions. Many years ago we tried unsuccessfully to add a new tradition. Our youngest son wanted our dinner to be the fabled 'Christmas Goose'. I should have been more cautious, because this is the same son who talked his dad and I into fixing the famous Dr. Seuss, 'Green Eggs and Ham' for breakfast.

However, thinking to start a new tradition, we began to plan our Christmas dinner around roast goose. We checked the local market only to discover a goose for Christmas was a special order and quite expensive. Sharing our woes about the lack of a goose with neighbors and friends, our very own 'White Knight' came to the rescue. He was decked out in a bright orange hunter vest and bearing a goose from his hunting trip.

Even though it was smaller than the turkeys I had purchased in the past, we had our goose. Now what to do with it? None of my cookbooks at that time had a recipe for cooking a goose. And, I didn't know wild geese were different from domestic geese, but what did I care, our neighbor had saved the day and this one was cleaned and ready to prepare. Being young and not knowing much about cooking it seemed logical that a bird is a bird, and how different from a turkey could it be. Following that line of thought, I seasoned it, wrapped it in foil, and stuck it in the oven, totally unaware goose meat was very greasy and it shouldn't be wrapped in foil. Later I learned it needed to be in a roasting pan where the grease could be drained during cooking. Fortunately there was enough other tasty foods, the



goose fiasco didn't ruin our dinner. And, that disaster turned into one of my treasured memories. Although, I must add, Christmas Goose at our house never became a tradition.

Whether you cook goose, turkey, ham or any of your other favorites, you might enjoy reading some of the following recipes from my antique cookbook collection. The pioneers did things a bit different. Notice the 'Kentucky Housewife' roast goose recipe is for cooking on a spit before a good fire. For those who don't have a spit, the following recipe from 'Favorite Recipes' by Merrill Library Club, offers a bit more conventional method to 'Roast Goose and Cranberry Sauce'. ❁

**A Goose for Roasting
Kentucky Housewife, 1839**

A goose for roasting should be young and very fat, otherwise it is not good; and if practicable, let it lie in salt for a few hours before it is cooked. Then rinse it clean and wipe it dry with a cloth. Make a stuffing of equal portions of minced onions, bread crumbs and grated ham; season it with butter, salt, pepper and sage; make it moist with sweet milk, and work it together till it is well incorporated. Then fill the body of the goose with the mixed mass; skewer the legs to the body, rub it over with lard, pin white paper over the breast, and roast it on a spit before a good fire, basking it occasionally with lard or butter.* When you think it is done, try it by piercing it with a fork in several places to the bone, and if it is very tender and will admit the fork to the bone with ease, you may be sure it is done; but if it will not, roast it longer. At the last, take off the paper dredge and froth the goose handsomely and see that every part of it is of a light brown. Having boiled the heart and liver, mince them fine, and put them in the drippings, with a large spoonful of brown flour, and a few minced sage leaves; do not pour it round the goose, but serve it in a boat, and have upon the table apple sauce, or stewed peaches, and green peas, or mashed potatoes.

**Wine Sauce
Kentucky Housewife, 1839**

Melt or draw half a pound of butter, and stir into it immediately, while warm, three gills of white wine, three tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar, and a grated nutmet. Serve it up with any kind of boiled puddings that have in them flour, butter or grated bread.

**Roast Goose
'Favorite Recipes' Merrill Library Club, date unknown**

Lightly salt and stuff dressed goose* with the following: 1 teaspoon sage, 1 teaspoon chopped onion to 1 pint of bread crumbs. Moisten with salted broth made by boiling finely chopped giblets. Do not stuff too tightly, the dressing will swell. Sew up opening firmly. Have oven moderately hot, with salted water in pan, roast three hours in closed roaster or if open bake pan turn and baste as needed to prevent browning unevenly. When done remove from the roaster and pour off fat and to the brown gravy add chopped giblets with some of the water they have been cooked in, thicken with flour, salt and pepper to taste.

Cranberry Sauce

1 quart cranberries, 2 cups water, 1 cup sugar, 15 marshmallows, 1 package Jell-O. Grind cranberries and boil 5 minutes. Add marshmallows, sugar and Jell-O. Let cook, add chopped nuts and apple. Put into a mold.

**(USDA Food and Safety Inspection Service explains for optimum safety, stuffing poultry or wild fowl is not recommended. Since the pioneers did not know this, nor had they heard of USDA, they cooked their stuffing inside the bird. Today it is recommended for more even cooking and safety you cook your stuffing outside the bird in a casserole. Use a food thermometer to check that the internal temperature of the stuffing reaches a safe minimum internal temperature of 165° F.)*



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