



TURKEY COOKING & TIPS GUIDE



Get Cooking with Canadian Turkey!



Turkey on the Menu

Think about it, cooking with turkey is an obvious choice.

It's TASTY: A unique flavour you just can't get anywhere else.

It's LEAN and NUTRIENT-RICH: An excellent base for a balanced diet.

It's EASY to cook: Simply swap it into your favourite recipes.

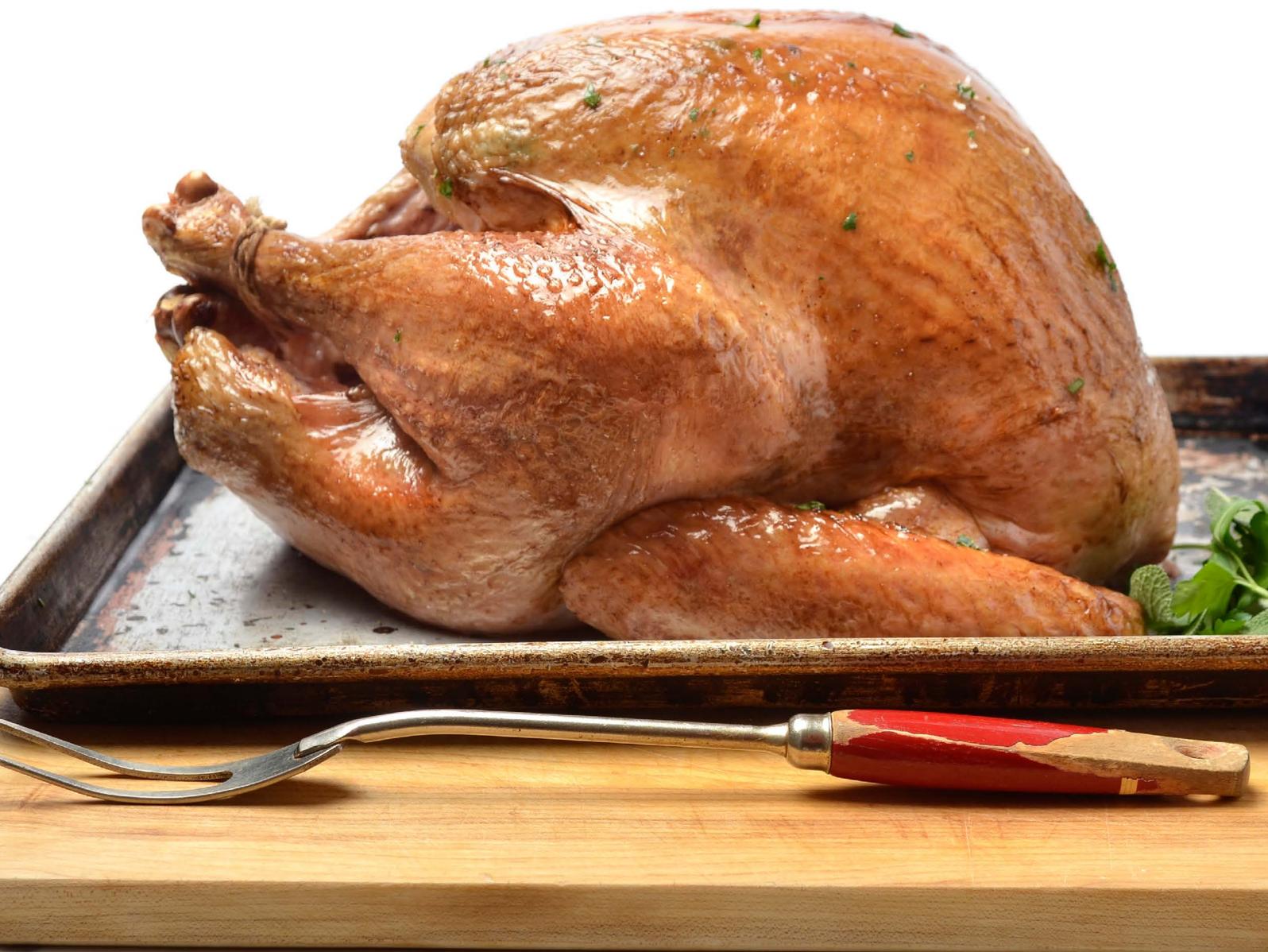
It's VERSATILE: It can be the centerpiece for any occasion or every day, and it pairs well with any flavour at breakfast, lunch or dinner.

It's VALUE-FRIENDLY: Plan ahead and use leftover turkey as a starter to prepare quick, delicious and nutritious meals during the week.

Make canadianturkey.ca your go-to resource for all things turkey. You'll find recipes, nutrition facts, how-to's, quick tips and much more.

Whole Turkey

Need help roasting a whole turkey?
Here are some tips to get you started.



PORTIONS

Wondering about portions? See our [Whole Turkey Calculator](#).

- The most common sizes of whole turkeys found in stores will range between 8 lb to 25 lb.
- Calculations are estimates only and are based on suggested 1 lb per person or 1.5 lb per person if planning for leftovers.



THAWING

The safest way to thaw frozen turkey is either in the refrigerator or in cold water. Remember to always follow [safe food handling](#) procedures.

Once thawed, keep your turkey refrigerated and cook within 48 hours.

Never thaw your turkey at room temperature!

Refrigerator Method:

- Place turkey on a tray on a bottom shelf in the refrigerator.
- Allow 5 hours of thawing time per pound (10 hours/kg).

Cold Water Method:

- Keep the turkey in its original wrapping.
- In a large container, cover the turkey completely with cold water.
- Change the water at least every hour.
- Allow 1 hour of thawing time per pound (2 hours/kg).

[\(See the video\)](#)



STORING

Always check best-before dates on product packaging to determine how long a fresh, whole turkey can be safely stored in the refrigerator.

*After cooking, keep turkey hot (above 140°F [60°C])
or refrigerate (below 40°F [4°C])*

Storing Frozen Turkey:

Whole turkeys can be kept frozen for 1 year.

Do not freeze once thawed!

Storing Cooked Turkey:

Keep for up to 4 days in the refrigerator or up to 3 months in the freezer.

Do not leave turkey at room temperature for more than 2 hours!

BRINING & FLAVOURING

There are many options for flavouring your turkey before, during and after cooking.

Brining before you cook adds flavour and moisture to turkey meat by soaking the whole turkey in salted water (*no extra salt needed when cooking*).

See how to brine your whole turkey [here](#).

Rubs and **Finishing Sauces** (Glazes) are a perfect complement to flavour-boost your turkey. Here are some suggestions but you can make your own special flavour combos. Try Canadian Turkey's Make-at-Home Spice Blends and Finishing Sauces. These work for turkey cuts as well.

Get the blends [here](#).

Stuffing helps flavour the turkey from the inside and keep it moist, but you can also prep and serve on the side.

Here is a [classic turkey sausage stuffing](#) recipe, but you can give stuffing your own twist.

ROASTING

- Cook a whole turkey to an internal temperature of **170°F (77°C)** in the thickest part of the thigh for an unstuffed turkey and **180°F (82°C)** for a stuffed turkey.
- When roasting, any stuffing placed in the cavity of the bird should reach an internal temperature of at least **165°F (74°C)**.
- Let the turkey stand for at least 20-30 minutes before carving.

Visit the [Whole Turkey](#) page on our website for more details or view the [Turkey Basics: How To video series](#).

Cooking times may vary depending on:
 The temperature of the turkey going into the oven; the accuracy of the oven's thermostat; how many times the oven door is opened during roasting; the type and size of roasting pan used; and, the size of the turkey in relation to the size of the oven.

| APPROXIMATE TIMETABLE FOR ROASTING A WHOLE TURKEY* | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Weight | Stuffed | Unstuffed |
| 8 – 10 lbs (3.6 – 4.5 kg) | 2 h 40 min - 3 h 20 min | 2 h - 2 h 30 min |
| 11 – 13 lbs (5.0 - 5.9 kg) | 3 h 40 min - 4 h 20 min | 2 h 45 min - 3 h 15 min |
| 14 – 16 lbs (6.4 - 7.3 kg) | 4 h 40 min - 5 h 20 min | 3 h 30 min - 4 h |
| 17 – 19 lbs (7.7 - 8.6 kg) | 5 h 40 min - 6 h 20 min | 4 h 15 min - 4 h 45 min |
| 20 – 22 lbs (9.1 - 10.0 kg) | 6 h 40 min - 7 h 20 min | 5 h - 5 h 30 min |
| 23 - 24 lbs (10.4 - 10.9 kg) | 7 h 40 min - 8 h | 5 h 45 min - 6 h |

*Cooking times are approximate at 350°F (175°C).



Visit the [Whole Turkey](#) page at canadianturkey.ca for more information on how to choose, prepare and cook your whole turkey.

NATIONAL SITE 



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Easy as ABC

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YEAR ROUND WHOLE TURKEY HOW TOS

All you need to know to prepare a whole Canadian turkey for friends and family at every occasion.

BUYING A WHOLE TURKEY

SAFE FOOD HANDLING

ROASTING A WHOLE TURKEY

BARBEQUING A WHOLE TURKEY



WHOLE TURKEY RECIPES

DEEP FRYING A WHOLE TURKEY

THAWING A WHOLE TURKEY



BRINING A WHOLE TURKEY

SPATCHCOCKING OR FLATTENING A WHOLE TURKEY



TURKEY BASICS: HOW-TO VIDEOS

STORING A WHOLE TURKEY

CARVING A WHOLE TURKEY



WHOLE BIRD CALCULATOR

Go to our [Turkey Basics](#) videos to view our easy-to-follow How To videos on making delicious turkey **Stuffing**, **Gravy** and **Stock**, and learn how to use a meat **thermometer**.



Turkey Cuts

Turkey is available in various cuts that offer variety and versatility all year round.



PORTIONS

Boneless turkey breast: ¼ lb (125 g)*

Turkey thighs, drumsticks and wings: ½ lb (250 g)*

Ground turkey: ¼ lb (125 g)*

**per person/serving*



THAWING

Frozen turkey cuts should be thawed in the refrigerator or by using the cold water method and, when thawed, cooked within 48 hours.

While turkey cuts may be thawed using a microwave, it should be done with care and the thawed meat must be cooked immediately following thawing.

Never thaw your turkey cuts at room temperature!

Refrigerator Method:

This method of thawing turkey cuts is the safest, as it keeps the meat cold until it is completely defrosted.

- Place tray pack on a tray on a bottom shelf in the refrigerator.
- Allow 5 hours of thawing time per pound (10 hours/kg).

Cold Water Method:

- Keep the turkey cut in its tray pack.
- In a container, cover the tray pack completely with cold water.
- Change the water at least every hour.
- Allow 1 hour of thawing time per pound (2 hours/kg).
- Once thawed, keep your turkey meat refrigerated and cook within 48 hours.

STORING

Consult best before dates on product packaging to determine how long fresh turkey meat can be safely stored in the refrigerator. If none, Health Canada recommends using refrigerated turkey meat within 2-3 days of purchase.

*After cooking, keep turkey hot (above 140°F [60°C])
or refrigerate (below 40°F [4°C])*

Storing Frozen Turkey Cuts:

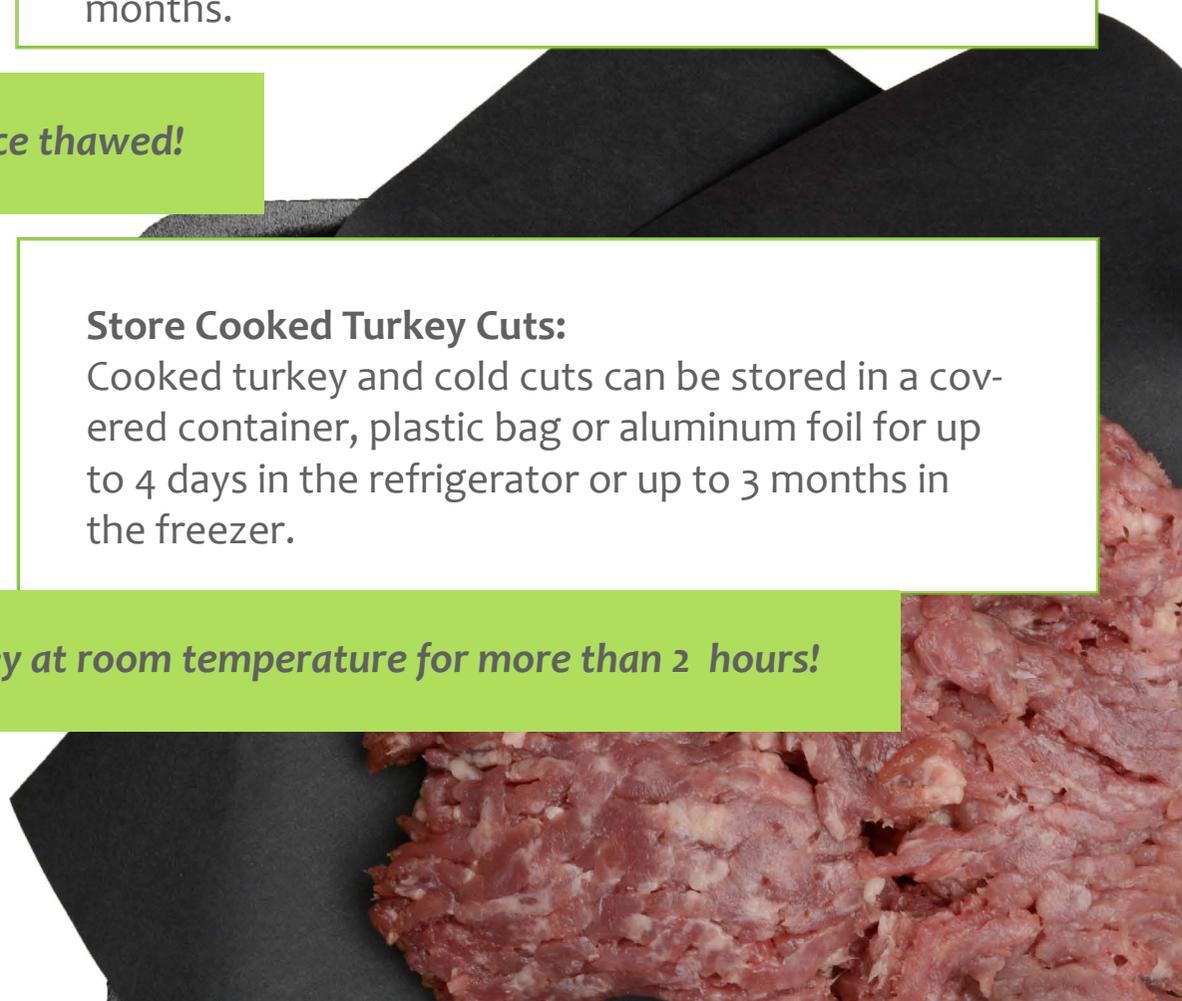
Turkey cuts can be kept frozen for up to 6 months. Ground turkey can be kept in the freezer for 2-3 months.

Do not freeze once thawed!

Store Cooked Turkey Cuts:

Cooked turkey and cold cuts can be stored in a covered container, plastic bag or aluminum foil for up to 4 days in the refrigerator or up to 3 months in the freezer.

Do not leave turkey at room temperature for more than 2 hours!



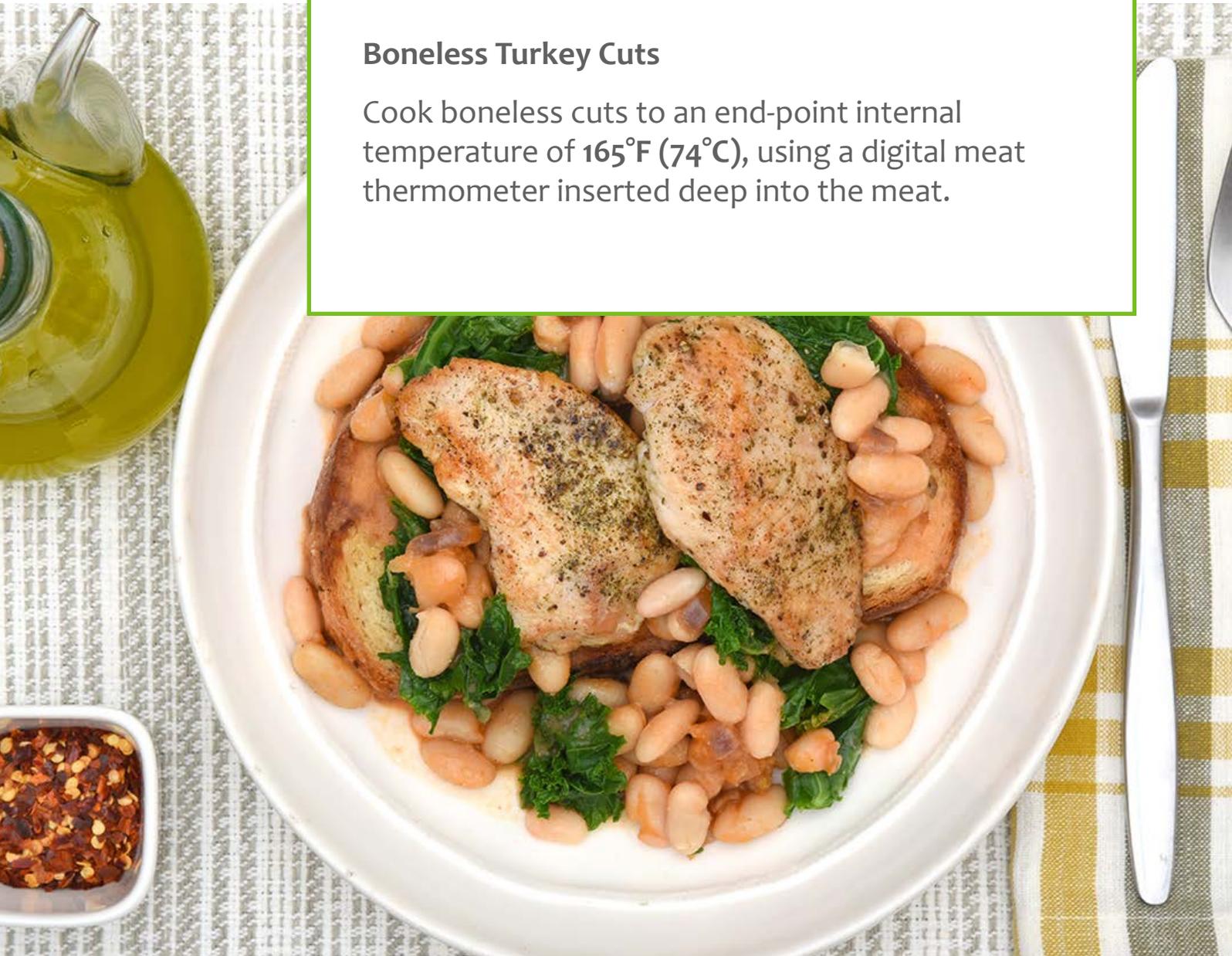
COOKING

Bone-In Turkey Cuts

Cook bone-in breasts, thighs, drumsticks and wings until a digital meat thermometer inserted into the meat, away from the bone, registers **165°F (74°C)**.

Boneless Turkey Cuts

Cook boneless cuts to an end-point internal temperature of **165°F (74°C)**, using a digital meat thermometer inserted deep into the meat.



BASIC CUTS

Leg/Drum



Wings/Drumettes



Thighs



Turkey Necks (Stock)



Breast



MANY OPTIONS

Medallions



Meatballs



Sausages



Kebobs



Patties



Cubes



Thigh Roast



Ground



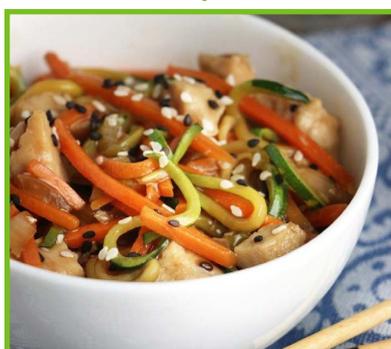
Meatloaf



Scallopini



Strips



Breast Roast



Get to know your turkey cuts!

If you do not see them in store, ask your grocer or butcher.

Visit the [Turkey Cuts](#) section at canadianturkey.ca for more information on available turkey cuts, how to select and prepare them, and for delicious recipe ideas.

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VARIETY & VERSATILITY

Canadian turkey is available in various cuts that offer variety and versatility all year round, and for every meal. See how well turkey pairs with different flavour profiles to provide you with quick, tasty and nutritious every day meals. Look for it in your grocery store.

TURKEY CUTS

COOKING TURKEY CUTS

THAWING TURKEY CUTS

STORING TURKEY CUTS

**SECTIONING A WHOLE
RAW TURKEY**

SAFE FOOD HANDLING

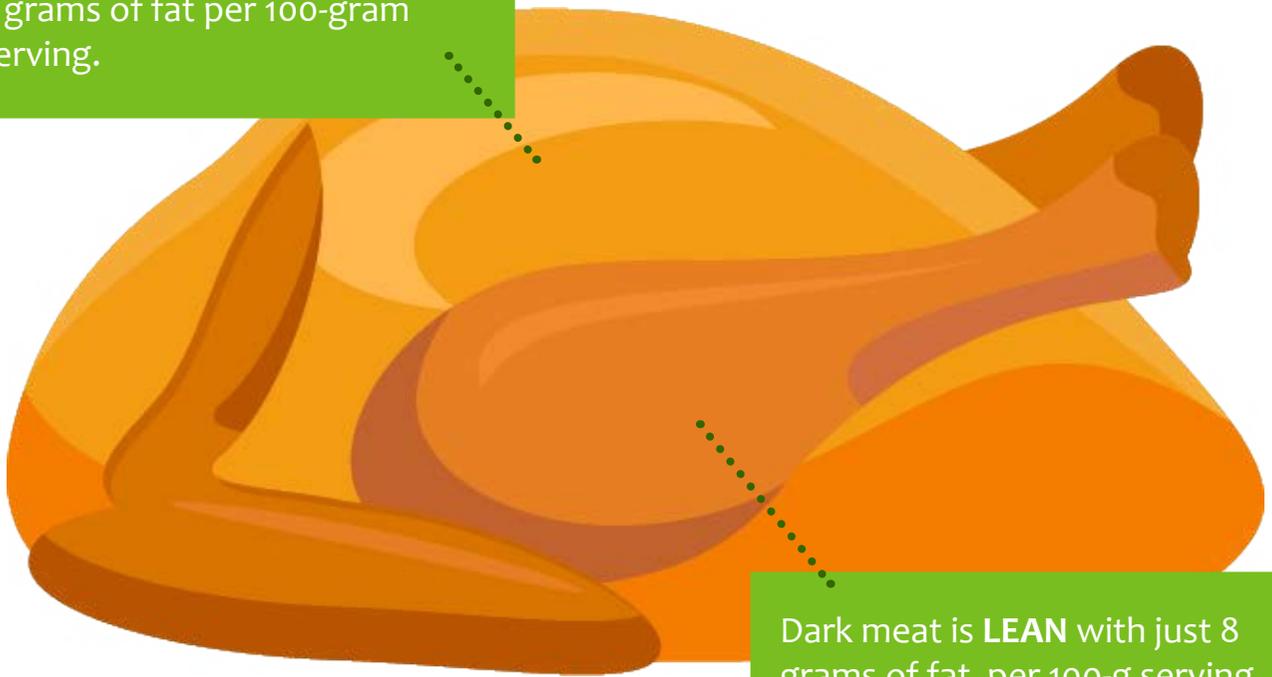


NUTRITION

Turkey is a nutritional powerhouse and can be part of a balanced diet.

For more information go to canadianturkey.ca/nutrition.

White meat is **LEAN** with just 3 grams of fat per 100-gram serving.



Dark meat is **LEAN** with just 8 grams of fat per 100-g serving.

- Turkey has a whole lot of health-boosting nutrients per calorie, such as **IRON, ZINC** and **SELENIUM**. Dark meat is especially rich in these nutrients.
- Packed with **PROTEIN**. Each 100-gram serving has about 30 grams of high-quality protein.
- All fresh cuts of turkey are naturally low in **SODIUM**.
- Both white and dark meat are both an excellent source of **Vitamin B12**.

WANT MORE?

Sign up to receive the [Get Cooking with Canadian Turkey](#) eNewsletter every month.

Find recipe ideas, nutrition tips, easy meal planning solutions and enter our monthly contest from Canadian Turkey.

Join the conversation!



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Raised with Pride™



No added hormones or steroids



Cage free and free to roam



Mixed grains and oilseed feed



Free access to food and water 24hrs a day



Mandatory food safety and flock care programs



550+ turkey farmers

...by over 550 turkey farmers across Canada.

This publication is brought to you by **Turkey Farmers of Canada (TFC)**, the national voice of Canadian turkey farmers.



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