05/05/11 - Whole Turkey On The Barbecue

Today dawned hot and blue, birds chirping, the perfume of Honey Suckle, Jasmine, and Citrus blossoms is in the super dry air. The mercury is going to rise to around 90 degrees in my neck of the woods. That is definitely warm and while usually I get away without running my air conditioning this time of year, today I will put it on. Now, there is the conundrum, shall I turn on the oven during a heat wave? I want to make dinner but not heat up the house. I think a total barbecue menu is in order.

I have prepared a large Turkey (around 17 pounds), my recipe is simple, just blend 6 whole garlic cloves with 3 tablespoons of olive oil in a mini processor and give the turkey a massage.

To barbecue the turkey I will need to use indirect heat. Using direct heat would burn the outside before the inside had a chance to cook. Wrapping the bird in foil is nothing more than steaming it in its own juice so. I have a three burner barbecue, gas grill. I preheated the whole thing on medium high for about 20 minutes. If you have a two burner grill just leave the heat on one side. The turkey goes on the off side. If you use charcoal, leave a spot where there is no heat underneath, no direct coals.

Next with my thick heat proof mitts, I removed the center grill and place a foil pan

inside the barbecue where there would normally be a flame. The foil pan is to catch juice and drippings. Return the grill racks over the foil drip pan. Place the garlic rubbed and trussed (just tie the legs together at the ankles) turkey breast side down on the grill rack over the foil pan. There should be heat rising on both sides of the bird but not directly beneath it. Close the hood of the barbecue and check on its progress after about two hours.When the back is golden and toasty, glove your hands and using a tong or your hands give the turkey a flip to the breast side up position. Once again close the lid of your grill. After about ½ hour open the lid and check for golden color and place an instant read thermometer in the thickest part of a thigh to see if it has reached 165 degrees. Remove the turkey to a large platter with sides when the temperature is right. Let the turkey stand at least 1/2 hour to 1 hour before you carve it, uncovered.

Turn off the grill and when it has cooled a bit, remove the foil pan with all of the juice very carefully. Pour the drippings or juice into a glass pitcher and let the fat and gelatin separate. Skim off the fat and save the gelatin. The gelatin is fabulous in sandwiches, better then mayonnaise.Grill some vegetables or if you want to roast them place them in a heat proof dish or better yet, a throw away foil pan with a little olive oil. Place vegies in the barbecue as well.

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