Cleo Coyle's
Cozy Roast Turkey Dinner with Homemade Gravy

Text and photos (c) by Alice Alfonsi who writes [The Coffeehouse Mysteries](#) as [Cleo Coyle](#) with her husband, Marc Cerasini.

A six to eight pound turkey breast is a wonderful choice for smaller Thanksgiving dinner gatherings, especially if you prefer white meat. For those having larger parties, this makes a great second turkey, giving the table plenty of extra breast meat and providing more leftovers for delicious turkey sandwiches and turkey salads. Our secret to making a really terrific Thanksgiving dinner using a small turkey breast (rather than a whole turkey) is the additional purchase of turkey wings. Why? Small turkey breasts come without wings, so we buy them separately for roasting right along with the bird. While they cook, they render plenty of extra juices for making a rich homemade gravy, a must for a truly delicious turkey dinner. See our gravy recipe at the end of this one. But first, let's get that turkey started...

Ingredients:

6 to 8 pound turkey breast***** ***(see note below on fresh vs frozen)*****
+ 2 to 4 turkey wings *(optional, for extra gravy juices)*
3/4 stick (6 T) softened butter
1 teaspoon Bell Seasoning
1 teaspoon Poultry Seasoning
½ teaspoon ground white pepper
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon ground sage
½ teaspoon kosher salt
1 tablespoon cooking oil or cooking spray

****FRESH VS. FROZEN:*** We recommend using fresh turkey breast, though frozen will work fine, BUT be sure to allow **at least 24 hours to thaw** the frozen breast in the refrigerator before cooking. Note that larger birds take several days to thaw (24 hours in the fridge for every 5 pounds). To learn more about how to thaw a turkey, [click here](#).

***To adapt this recipe for a larger turkey**, double the amount of "slurry" for birds 12-16 pounds; triple it for birds 17-25 pounds, follow package directions on cooking time and temperature. To prevent over-browning, cover loosely with foil near end of cooking time.

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Directions:

Step 1—Prep the oven and slurry: First preheat oven to 350° F. *(When adapting this recipe for a larger, whole turkey, we roast at 325° F.)* Place softened butter into a bowl and add your Bell Seasoning, Poultry Seasoning, white and black pepper, ground sage, and kosher salt. Blend everything well with a fork until you have a soft slurry (as shown in my photo at right).

Step 2—Prep the bird: Wash the turkey breast and pat dry. If using wings, remove the wing tips, then wash the wings and pat them dry. Line a shallow baking or roasting pan with aluminum foil. Grease the rack that sits on top. Place the turkey on the rack, and (if using) position wings on either side of the breast. Slather the breast with the slurry that you made in Step 1.

The wings in my photo (at right >) are not attached. As I mentioned, small turkey breasts come without wings. Marc and I like to buy the wings separately and roast them with the turkey for extra pan juices. You can coat them with a bit of the slurry or simply salt and pepper them, your call.

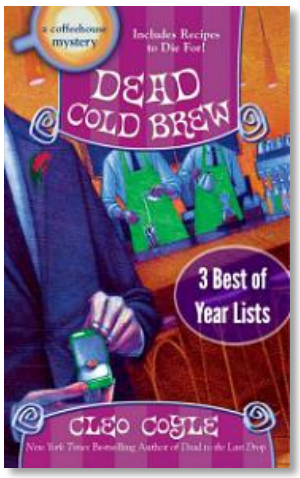
For <u>even more</u> pan dripping, we often roast a second pair of wings in a separate pan. (See photo below.)

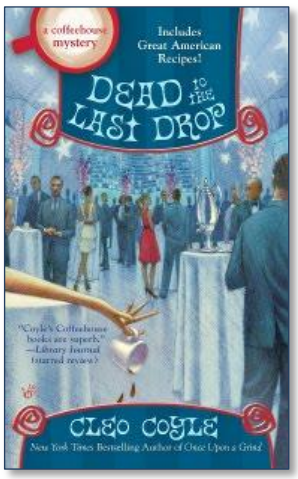
Step 3—Roast and cool: Roast the breast, uncovered, according to package instructions, or about 20 minutes per pound. Turn the pan a few times during the cooking to make sure the turkey roasts evenly.

During the last hour, baste the meat in its own juices every fifteen minutes or so. At the end of the cooking time, use a meat thermometer to measure the turkey breast's temperature. You're looking for 165 degrees F. to confirm that the turkey meat is properly cooked.*

Note for *Larger Turkeys: *If adapting this recipe to a larger, whole bird, watch the skin near the end of the cooking time and cover loosely with foil to prevent over-browning.*

Remove the turkey from the oven, tent loosely with foil, and let sit for AT LEAST 30 MINUTES before slicing. The resting period will keep your turkey nice and moist. If you slice it too soon after removing it from the oven, the juices will run out and the turkey meat will taste dry. Extra pan juices come from the wings, which we use to whip up our Homemade Turkey Gravy. See our recipe on the next page.





Eat with joy! —Cleo

The Coffeehouse Mysteries are bestselling culinary mysteries, set in a landmark Greenwich Village coffeehouse. Each includes the added bonus of recipes.
To learn more and see more recipes, visit Cleo Coyle's online coffeehouse at www.CoffeehouseMystery.com
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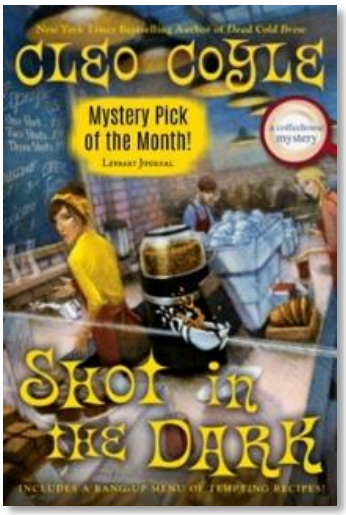

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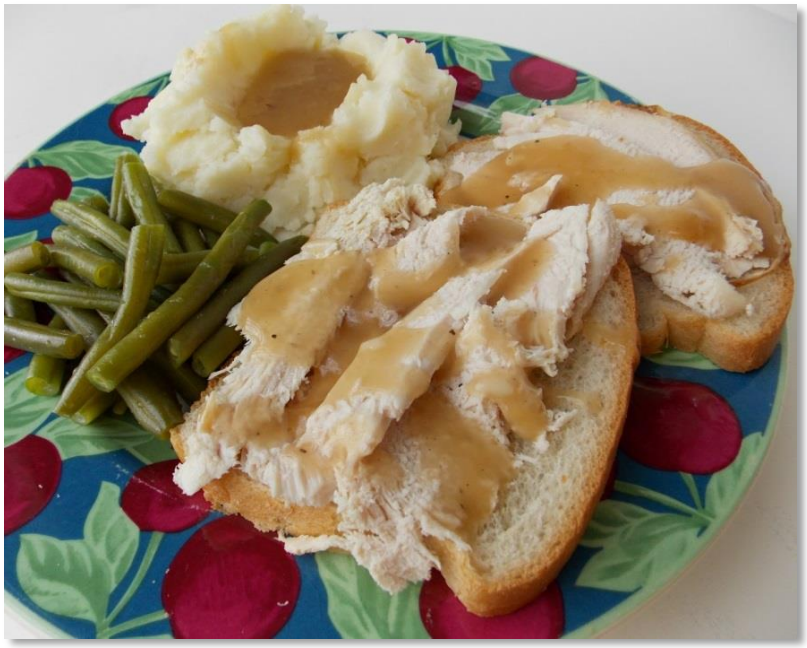
Cleo Coyle's Homemade Turkey Gravy



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Makes about 1 ½ cups

Ingredients:

2 cups pan drippings *(see note below*)*

2 Tablespoons Wondra flour**

Salt and pepper to taste

***Pan Drippings Note:** If you don't have enough pan drippings for 2 cups, simply add chicken or turkey stock until you reach the 2 cup amount.*

****Wondra Flour Note:** If you've never used Wondra Flour, look for its blue cardboard canister in the same grocery store aisle that shelves all-purpose flour. It's a handy little helper for thickening gravies and making quick sauces. You can make an easy white sauce with it, too. The recipe is right on the side of its cardboard canister.

Step 1—Make a roux: While the turkey is cooling, pour off the pan drippings into a bowl and let them cool, allowing the fat to separate. Skim off two tablespoons of fat from the top of the cooled drippings and warm this small amount of fat in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Stir in the flour until the mixture thickens. You've just created a roux. Now gently cook until the roux turns slightly brown (1-3 minutes).

Step 2—Finish the gravy: Measure your remaining pan drippings. If you have less than 2 cups, pour in enough chicken or turkey stock to make the full two. Whisk these two cups of drippings (and/or stock) into the roux that you made in Step 1. Heat the mixture to a boil, whisking constantly.

Lower the heat, and continue to whisk gently while letting the gravy simmer until it thickens and the flour cooks (4 to 5 minutes). The key here (to prevent the gravy from breaking) is continually whisking. Add salt and pepper to taste, serve hot, and...

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