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## Odd Birds: Three Thanksgiving Alterna-turkeys

For recipes, see page 199.



### BEER-BUTT TURKEY

■ **What it is:** A takeoff on a chicken recipe Matthew McConaughey made famous on *The Rosie O'Donnell Show* earlier this year. The slow-cooking BBQ method, taught to the actor by gastronomes named Buzz-head and Coondog, involves stuffing the turkey with a right-side-up, partly full (also known as partly drunk) can of beer to suffuse the meat with essence of brewski.

■ **What it takes:** A charcoal grill to cook the turkey over (a gas grill will ignite the skin).

■ **How it tastes:** Smoky and silky-fleshed, with a faint beery aroma and extra-crispy skin. 🍷🍷

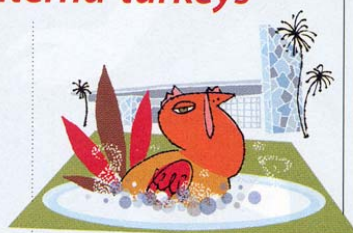


### TOFURKY

■ **What it is:** A specially molded tofu "turkey" roast, with stuffing, "drummettes" (tempeh shaped into turkey legs) and "giblet" gravy (also tofu), so non-carnivores can give thanks they finally have a holiday entree.

■ **What it takes:** A mere 40 minutes from box to table, after thawing.

■ **How it tastes:** Utterly unlike turkey (despite a pretty good replication of skin) and a bit on the bland side—but not unpleasant. A single three-pound Tofurky feeds four for about \$20. A portion of that money goes to an Adopt-a-Turkey program, so you can save a turkey twice over. 🍴



### DEEP-FRIED TURKEY

■ **What it is:** All the rage among folks from bayou country and celeb chefs, too, thanks to a rep for added moisture and heightened flavor.

■ **What it takes:** Patience and brute strength; a 30-quart or larger stockpot (lobster-boil size); and an outdoor propane burner (if you cook inside, and the oil tops 350 degrees, your house could catch fire).

■ **How it tastes:** Moist and flavorful—and greasy. But unless you use a special turkey hook to lower and lift the bird (they're sold for about \$40 via mail order and on the Web), it will look like it's been put through the wringer. 🍴 —Laura Reiley

▶ **mLe.link**  
www.barbecuen.com/docmiller sells turkey hooks; www.tofurky.com has recipes and stores that sell tofu birds across the U.S.

🍷🍷 Fun and gobble-able   🍴 Tasty, but tough going—wing it at your own risk   🍴 For birds of a different feather (vegetarians) only

### BREAKTHROUGH SKILLS: RECIPES

(continued from page 55)

#### BEER-BUTT TURKEY

One 12-pound turkey  
2 Tbs. ground black pepper  
3 Tbs. Creole Seasoning (such as Tony Chachere's, at specialty food stores)  
3 Tbs. mixture of coarsely chopped garlic and parsley  
1 can of beer, any brand

Combine black pepper, Creole seasoning and garlic-parsley mix in a cup and mix well. Rub it all over the turkey, inside and out. Drink (or pour off) about one third of the beer, then slide the upright can into the cavity of the bird so that the opening of the can is closest to the breast side. Place the turkey on the heated grill, but not directly over the flame. Close the grill's lid and cook slowly (a 12-pound bird requires about 4 hours of cooking time). It's done when a meat thermometer registers an internal temperature of 160°F. Serves ten.

#### DEEP-FRIED TURKEY

One 10- to 12-pound turkey  
1½ to 2 gallons peanut oil  
4 egg whites  
Cajun/Creole seasoning, to taste  
Kosher salt, to taste

Heat the oil to 350°F. Beat the egg whites until frothy and paint the turkey with the egg-white wash. Rub the entire turkey generously with Cajun/Creole seasoning, then sprinkle with kosher salt.

When the oil is hot, carefully slide that baby in, using either a specialty turkey-frying hook or our DIY contraption, a cradle made out of two coat hangers, to encircle the turkey snugly: Untwist the wire of one hanger, run the entire length underneath the bird's armpits; twist it shut in front and attach it to the second coat hanger fashioned into a reinforced handle.

Cook for about 36 minutes (or about three minutes per pound). The turkey is done when the breast meat reaches an internal temperature of 150°–155° F (if it floats, it's overcooked). Carefully remove the turkey from the oil and let it rest for 30 minutes, loosely wrapped in aluminum foil, before carving. Serves ten.