

# CHRISTMAS MEAL PLAN 2023 🎄



★ Text in pink are optional recipes, depending on what you have chosen to make ★

## the menu...

- Classic roast turkey with orange and herb butter OR easy brined turkey crown
- **Slow Cooker Coca Cola Ham** (optional)
- If you're having ham, then you'll need **cauliflower cheese!**
- Crispy roast potatoes
- [Honey mustard roasted carrots and parsnips](#)
- Christmas Spiced braised red cabbage
- sausage, sage and cranberry stuffing balls
- maple glazed pigs in blankets
- Brussels Sprouts with bacon and chestnuts
- cranberry orange sauce
- **Jamie Oliver Christmas gravy** (if you want to make homemade gravy, this is the best recipe I've tried)
- Shop bought bread sauce

## And for Dessert.....

- Christmas pudding

## Don't like Christmas pudding? Why not try...

- Pavlova Christmas Wreath
- no bake Baileys cheesecake or no bake after Eight cheesecake
- no churn Baileys ice cream (which is lovely with Christmas pudding!)

## A week before Christmas Day:

- Make the [cranberry sauce](#) and freeze

- Make [red cabbage](#) and freeze
- Make [Christmas pudding](#) (if you haven't already)
- If you are making your own gravy, make it now and freeze.
- [Make Baileys ice cream](#)

### **22nd December:**

- Check when you need to begin defrosting the turkey, if frozen
- Check cupboards and make a list of items needed - don't forget essentials such as tin foil, washing up liquid, cooking oil and batteries

### **23rd December:**

- Make the base of [pavlova wreath and the raspberry coulis](#)
- Make [Baileys cheesecake](#), [After eight cheesecake](#), or any other cheesecake options on my website but don't decorate it with whipped cream and chocolates yet.

### **24th December (morning):**

- Take red cabbage, cranberry sauce and gravy out of the freezer to defrost.
- prepare the sausagemeat stuffing balls (but don't cook them) and once cold place in an airtight container in the fridge
- prepare the pigs in blankets and place them (uncooked) in an airtight container in the fridge
- Trim base and halve (if very large) the Brussels sprouts and transfer to an airtight container. Refrigerate.
- If you're making the brined turkey crown recipe, prepare it now.
- Cook the slow cooker Ham in Coca-Cola, if making

### **Christmas Eve afternoon or evening:**

- Peel and chop the parsnips and carrots and place in food bag. Make up the honey mustard glaze and transfer to a Tupperware tub. Refrigerate both.
- If you're cooking a whole turkey, remove it from all packaging and take out the giblets, if there are any. Place it in a roasting tin or large

plate and pop it back in the fridge, making sure it is not touching any other items.

- make the **orange herb butter** for the turkey and refrigerate.
- Decorate the cheesecake (if making) with whipped cream topping and chocolates. Place in the fridge away from any strong smelling foods.
- If you wanted to, you could make the cauliflower cheese on Christmas Eve and reheat on Christmas Day. I personally don't do this as I prefer it fresh.

## **25th December - Cooking Time plan!**

**9:30am** – Remove the turkey\* and herb butter from the fridge.

\*If you're making the brined turkey crown recipe, please refer to [this post](#) for cooking times and adjust the plan accordingly\*

**10am** – preheat the oven to 180C/160Fan/350F. Pat the turkey dry with paper towels. Season and rub the butter all over the turkey.

**10:15** – Prepare potatoes (peel and cut), place in a large saucepan of cold water (don't add salt) and cover.

**10:30** – Place the turkey in the oven.

**11am** – If making the Pavlova Wreath, whip the cream for the filling. Decorate the pavlova with cream and fresh fruit. Place in the fridge.

**1pm** – Par boil potatoes. Cut the cauliflower into florets and place in cold water, if making cauliflower cheese.

**13:40** – Remove the turkey from the oven and using a meat thermometer, check it is fully cooked. (Please refer to this blog post for temperature and how to check if turkey is fully cooked).

**1:45** – turn up the oven to **220C/200Fan**. carrots and parsnips in. Take the sausagemeat stuffing balls, pigs in blankets, red cabbage and gravy out the fridge. Place a roasting tin with oil in the oven for the roast potatoes.

**1:50** – Bring the cauliflower florets to a boil and cook for about 8-10 minutes or until just beginning to soften. While the cauliflower is cooking, make the cheese sauce. (If you've already cooked the cauliflower cheese, you just need to reheat it when you make the Brussels). Place the cooked florets and sauce in a baking dish and set aside to heat through later.

**2pm** – If you're having Christmas pudding, reheat in a steamer or large saucepan filled halfway with simmering water for about one hour. Alternatively, reheat in the microwave later on – it's not my favourite method of reheating it, but if you're struggling with hob space you might have no choice.

**2:15** – Place the carrots and parsnips in a roasting tin and pour over the glaze. Season with salt and pepper and place in the oven. They'll take about 30-40 minutes to cook through.

**2:30pm** – Place the pigs in blankets and sausagemeat balls in the oven, turning them halfway through cooking.

**2:35pm** - Heat the red cabbage in a medium saucepan over a low to medium heat, stirring occasionally. Place the gravy in a medium saucepan and heat for about 20 minutes or until piping hot.

**2:40pm** – Make the Brussels sprouts with bacon and chestnuts. Place the cauliflower cheese in the oven and heat until bubbling.

**2:45pm** - Warm the bread sauce in a small pan over a low heat so it doesn't burn on the bottom. Place the cranberry sauce in a dish.

**2:50pm** – When everything is nice and hot, transfer to serving dishes. Carve the turkey.

**3pm** - Time to relax and enjoy your Christmas dinner. Merry Christmas! 🍷