

Cooking at Christmas

"People want familiarity on Christmas Day and you don't want to spend all day stressing about new recipes and unfamiliar ingredients so stick to what you know and love and get it right."

Phil Howard - Owner, The Square



"Keep your turkey in your conservatory or by the window because it is as cool as your fridge in winter and will defrost safely and quickly."

Brinder Narula - Head Chef, Benares



"Marinate your meat for 12hrs depending on the quality of the product. Too long and you may mask the original flavour of the meat."

Michael Beugnet - Head Chef, Strand Dining Rooms

"When preparing and cooking one of the most important meals of the year, I make sure I have my incredible family around me and a good glass of white wine."

Holger Jackisch - Executive Chef, The Savoy,



"Goose is always a good option for those who don't want to opt for turkey at Christmas. Wrap a few slices of good quality bacon strips over the bird. It will require a longer cooking time but follow the same principle as the turkey for best results."

Michael Beugnet - Head Chef, Strand Dining Rooms

"To stop your meat from drying out, cook it slower for longer and leave it to rest. Don't carve the turkey while it's hot."

Jeremy Bloor - Head Chef, OXO Tower Restaurant



"Make small Christmas pudding balls, wrap them in filo pastry and fry them. Serve them with brandy sauce. The marriage of the fruits, nuts and alcohol creates a taste sensation."

Holger Jackisch - Executive Chef, The Savoy



"Serve Christmas pudding piping hot with custard, brandy sauce or ice cream and take a second to smell that citrus, fruity, alcohol-soaked pudding just before you eat it. Set it on fire or add a bit of holly and icing sugar to the top of the pudding to add a bit more Christmas sparkle."

Robert Prendergast - Executive Head Chef, The Waldorf Hilton



"Pears are at their best in the winter months and this simple dessert brings out their beautifully delicate flavour. You could also serve with Greek yoghurt to make this a slightly lighter dish."

Penny Wabbit - Head Pastry Chef, OXO Tower Restaurant



Bookatable CHEFS' SECRETS