



Savory Apple and Bacon Holiday Dressing

A Story in a Skillet

My kitchen smells like memory. It starts with bacon sizzling. That sound is pure happiness. I always save a crispy piece for the cook. You should too.

Then come the apples and onions. They hiss and soften together. The sharp smell turns sweet and cozy. Doesn't that smell amazing? It tells you everything will be good. This matters because cooking is about layering love, one ingredient at a time.

Why We Call It Dressing

Some folks say stuffing. I say dressing. My grandpa told me why. Long ago, cooks thought it was fancy to “dress” a bird for the table. The bread mix was its outfit. I still laugh at that.

But here is a fun fact: *The name often depends on where you live!* “Stuffing” is more common up north. “Dressing” is popular down south. Which word does your family use? I would love to know.

The Magic of Sweet and Savory

Tart apples do something special. They cut through the rich bacon. They bring a little bright joy. It is not just sweet. It is balanced.

This matters on a big holiday plate. You have rich turkey, smooth potatoes. This dressing adds a fresh note. It makes your whole meal sing. Do you like sweet and savory mixed together?

Grandma's Little Trick

The recipe says to microwave some stuffing. This is my favorite trick. It warms the bread before it goes in the turkey. This helps it cook safely and evenly.

I use my hands to test the heat. If the mix is too hot to handle, it is ready. Be brave, but careful! This step keeps our holiday meal safe. What is your favorite kitchen trick you learned from family?

The Best Part: The Crust

We bake the extra in a dish. We add a bit more stock. Then we let it get

crispy. The top turns golden brown. That crunchy crust is my favorite bite.

It is a simple truth. Texture makes food exciting. Soft inside, crunchy outside. Every spoonful is a surprise. I think that is a good lesson for life, too. A little contrast makes everything better.

Ingredients:

Ingredient	Amount	Notes
Bacon	½ pound	cut into ½-inch pieces
Tart apples (e.g., Granny Smith)	6 medium	peeled and diced
Onions	4 medium	chopped coarse
Celery stalks	4	chopped coarse
Dry white wine	½ cup	
Fresh thyme leaves	2 tablespoons minced	
Fresh sage leaves	2 tablespoons	
Country bread, French, or white bread	1 ¼ pounds	cut into ½-inch cubes, dried (about 12 cups dried)
Turkey or chicken stock/broth	1 ¾ cups	low sodium if canned
Eggs	2	beaten
Fresh parsley leaves	½ cup	chopped



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Instructions

Step 1: Cook your bacon in a big skillet until it's nice and crisp. Scoop it onto a paper towel. Leave just a little of that tasty fat in the pan. Now, add your apples, onions, and celery. Let them cook until they get soft and smell wonderful. This takes about 15 minutes. Doesn't that smell amazing? I love this part.

See also Silken French Mashed Potatoes

Step 2: Pour in the white wine and add your thyme and sage. Let it bubble until the wine is mostly gone. Now, put this lovely mix into a big bowl. Add your dried bread cubes, stock, eggs, parsley, and the crispy bacon. Mix it all together with your hands. (This is the best way to get it perfectly combined!) Give it a taste. Does it need a little more salt or pepper?

Step 3: Butter a casserole dish. Put half of your stuffing in it. Dot the top with little bits of butter. Cover it and pop it in the fridge for later. Now, we heat the rest for the turkey. Microwave it until it's very hot to the touch. **How do you know it's hot enough? Share below!** Carefully spoon it into your turkey, but don't pack it tight.

Step 4: When your turkey is done roasting, take out the stuffing from inside. Set it aside. Get your reserved dish from the fridge. Add a bit more stock to it. Cover it with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Then, take the foil off. Let it bake until the top is golden and crispy. I still laugh at how everyone fights for the crispy bits!

Creative Twists

This recipe is wonderful as-is. But sometimes, it's fun to play. Try one of these little twists. They make it feel new again. My grandkids love to pick which one we'll try each year. It's become a silly tradition for us.

Add a handful of dried cranberries for a sweet, tart pop.

Swap the bacon for spicy breakfast sausage.

Use a crusty sourdough bread instead of white bread.

Which one would you try first? Comment below!

Serving & Pairing Ideas

This stuffing is the star of the plate. Serve it in a pretty bowl with a big spoon. I like to sprinkle extra fresh parsley on top. It looks so cheerful. A simple green salad with vinaigrette is perfect alongside. It cuts through the richness. For a drink, a chilled apple cider is just right. Grown-ups might enjoy a glass of the same white wine you cooked with. It ties the whole meal together. Which would you choose tonight?

See also Bacon and Potato Christmas Biscuits



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Keeping Your Dressing Cozy and Ready

Let's talk about storing this lovely dressing. It keeps well in the fridge for three days. Just cover it tightly with foil. You can also freeze it for a month. Use a freezer-safe container. Thaw it in the fridge overnight before reheating.

To reheat, add a splash of broth to keep it moist. Bake it covered at 350°F until warm. I once forgot to add the broth. The top got a little too crispy! Batch cooking this saves big holiday stress. Make it two days before your feast. This lets the flavors become best friends. Have you ever tried storing it this way? Share below!

Simple Fixes for Common Hiccups

Is your stuffing too dry? The bread may have been too dry. Always add the stock slowly. You can always add more. Is it too soggy? Your bread cubes might have been too fresh. They should feel like stale crackers. I remember when my first batch was like soup! We had extra "dressing soup" that year.

Does it lack flavor? Season it well with salt and pepper. Taste it before it goes in the dish. Getting the texture right builds your cooking confidence. Balancing flavors makes every bite a happy memory. Which of these problems have you run into before?

Your Quick Questions, Answered

Q: Can I make this gluten-free?

A: Yes! Use your favorite gluten-free bread. Let the cubes dry out

completely first.

Q: Can I make it ahead?

A: Absolutely. Mix everything and refrigerate for two days. Bake it just before serving.

Q: What if I don't have fresh herbs?

A: Use dried. Use one teaspoon dried for each tablespoon fresh. Rub dried herbs in your palms first. This wakes up their flavor.

Q: Can I make a smaller batch?

A: You can easily cut all ingredients in half. Use a smaller baking dish.

Q: Any optional tips?

A: A handful of dried cranberries adds a nice sweet touch. *Fun fact: This dish is called "stuffing" only when cooked inside the bird. Otherwise, it's "dressing"!* Which tip will you try first?

From My Kitchen to Yours

I hope this recipe finds a place at your table. The smell of apples and sage is pure comfort. It reminds me of my own grandmother's kitchen. I would love to hear about your cooking adventures. Have you tried this recipe? Tell me all about it in the comments below. I read every single one.

See also Festive Seven Layer Holiday Salad

Happy cooking!
—Elowen Thorn.



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Author: Elowen Thorn

Cooking Method:[Stovetop Baking](#)



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Cuisine:[American](#)



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Courses:[Side](#)

Difficulty: **Beginner**

Prep time: **30 minutes**

Cook time: **55 minutes**



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Rest time:

Total time: **1 hour 25 minutes**



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Servings: **11 servings**



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Calories: **320 kcal**

Best Season: Summer

Description

A savory and festive dressing combining crisp bacon, tart apples, and

aromatic herbs, perfect for your holiday turkey.

Ingredients

- ½ pound bacon, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 6 medium tart apples such as Granny Smith, peeled and diced
- 4 medium onions, chopped coarse
- 4 stalks celery, chopped coarse
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tablespoons fresh sage leaves
- 1 ¼ pounds country bread, French, or Pepperidge Farm white bread, cut into ½-inch cubes, dried (about 12 cups dried)
- 1 ¾ cups turkey stock or chicken stock or low sodium canned chicken broth
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ½ cup chopped fresh parsley leaves
- to taste Salt and pepper
- Butter for dotting and greasing
- ¼ cup stock (for baking reserved stuffing)

Instructions

1. Fry bacon in 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat until crisp and brown, about 5 minutes. Transfer bacon with slotted spoon to paper towel-lined plate; pour off all but 3 tablespoons fat from pan.
2. Add apples, onions, and celery to the skillet; sauté until softened, 14 to 15 minutes. Add wine, thyme, and sage; simmer until wine is almost evaporated, 1 to 2 minutes.
3. Transfer mixture to large microwave safe bowl. Stir in dried bread, turkey stock, eggs, parsley and reserved bacon until well combined.

Season with salt and pepper to taste.

4. Place half of mixed stuffing in buttered medium casserole dish, dot surface with butter, cover with buttered foil, and refrigerate until ready to use.
5. Microwave remaining stuffing on full power, stirring two or three times, until very hot (120 to 130 degrees), 6 to 8 minutes. Spoon 4 to 5 cups stuffing into turkey cavity until very loosely packed. Secure skin flap and prepare turkey for roasting as per your recipe.
6. For remaining stuffing: When turkey comes out of oven, add the 1/4 cup stock to dish of reserved stuffing, replace foil, and bake until hot throughout, about 20 minutes. Remove foil; continue to bake until stuffing forms golden brown crust, about 15 minutes longer.
7. Remove stuffing from turkey and carve. Serve, passing the separately baked stuffing as well.

Notes

Ensure stuffing is heated to at least 165°F for food safety. Do not stuff the turkey until just before roasting. The separately baked stuffing can be prepared as a side dish if you prefer not to stuff the bird.

Keywords:Stuffing, Dressing, Bacon, Apple, Holiday, Thanksgiving