

# Market America's Butcher - Ray Rastelli - Serves Up Some Tasty Holiday Meal Options Along With His Perfect Cooking Tips

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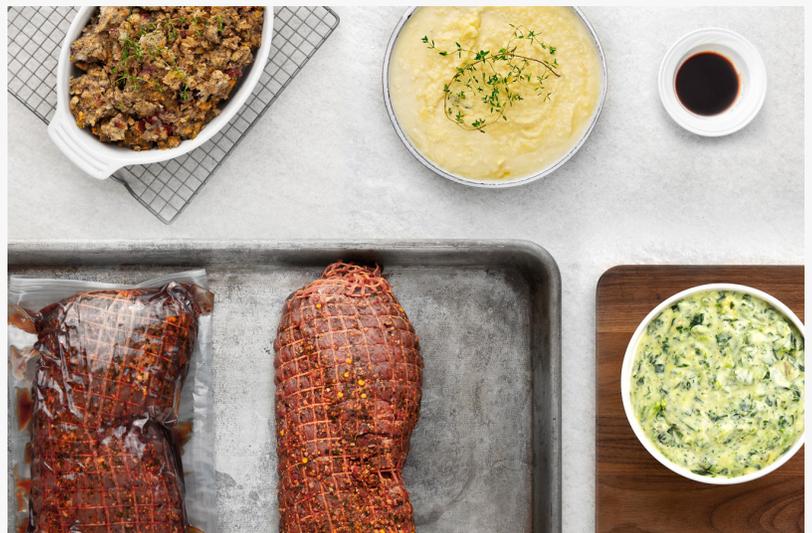
EINPresswire.com/ -- While things may be a bit different this holiday season, there's always reason to give thanks and make time for the ones you love – either in your home or with those you can connect with via phone or video call. And what would this special time of year be like without the all too familiar aroma of your favorite holiday dishes wafting from the kitchen, subtly reminding all to adjust the notch on your belt because some holiday feasting is about to go down?

With Thanksgiving only one week away, if you aren't sure how to reduce your meal size without reducing the flavor, [Market America](#) | [SHOP.COM's](#) personal Butcher, Ray Rastelli, Jr., is here to help with some tasty meal options and cooking tips that should serve you well all season long.

Ray Rastelli, Jr. has had a passion for food for much of his life. He decided to make it his career in 1975, when he opened a butcher shop called the Meat Stop in Deptford, NJ. Rastelli loved bringing quality meat to Deptford-area families and within a few years his brother Tony joined him and opened a second Meat Stop. Together, they went on to open a total of eight Meat Stops around South Jersey, transforming the



Rastelli Holiday Meal Features Turkey Roulade (with juicy apple & cranberry stuffing)

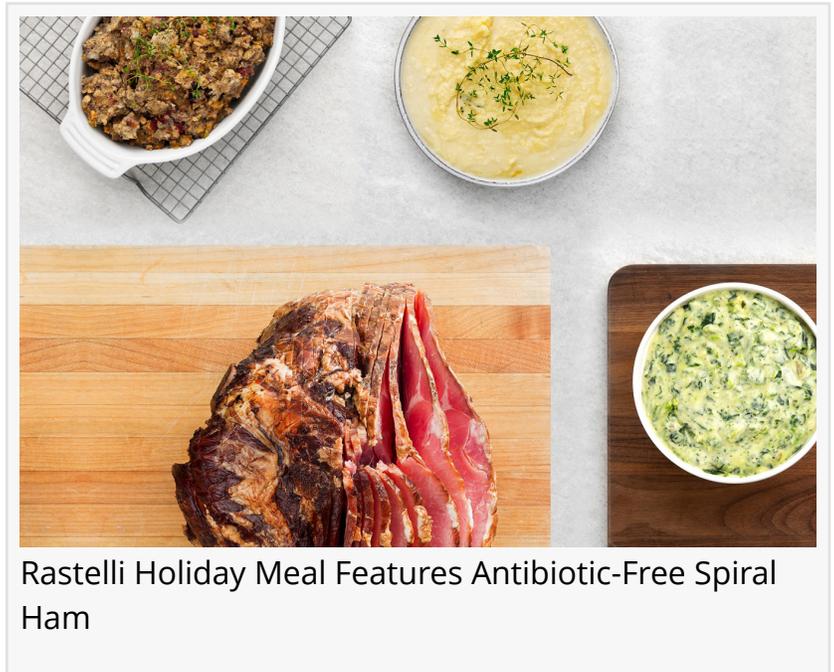


Rastelli Holiday Meal Features Black Angus Beef Tenderloin Roast

stores into a growing business that allows them to serve top quality products to families around the country.

“This year is definitely going to be a bit different. Like most families, my usual gathering is going to be a bit smaller, but our extended family is still planning to eat the same meal and celebrate together...virtually. It was very important to me to still be able to share the same meal with my loved ones who live far away, so we created “all-in-one” holiday meals -- roasts and sides that are already pre-seasoned, so

no one has to worry about their Aunt Sally, who can’t cook, eating a sandwich for Thanksgiving. We also focused on smaller roast sizes. The [Turkey Roulade](#) or [Beef Tenderloin](#) roasts are perfect for a household of 2-3 people,” said Rastelli.



Rastelli Holiday Meal Features Antibiotic-Free Spiral Ham

When it comes to baking your turkey, Rastelli says the most important tip to remember is to use a cooking bag. “Our [Turkey Roast](#) comes pre-seasoned and oven-ready in a cooking bag, so all you have to do is pop it into the oven. There’s no stressing about brining, basting or burning. It’s a fool-proof way to enjoy a delicious and juicy turkey on the big day” said Rastelli.

If you are preparing traditional turkey this year, Rastelli has his two biggest cooking tips: brine and stuff...but not too early. To make what Rastelli says is “the best turkey you ever had” and the most tasty and moist, he recommends brining.

“Remember to give yourself time. It takes anywhere from 18-24 hours to fully brine a bird, so start on Tuesday night. Take it out of the brine on Wednesday and rinse and pat dry. Then, place in the refrigerator uncovered overnight so the skin will dry from the brining. If you don’t allow the turkey to dry, the skin will not get brown and crispy,” said Rastelli.

Brining Recipe (for a medium-to-large turkey)

- 2 cups kosher salt
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 4 bay leaves
- 1 large navel orange cut in half
- 10 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 cup white wine
- 2 cups water

Add to a medium sauce pot and heat until the sugar and salt dissolve. Add ice to chill. Remove brine to a pot that will fit the turkey and add an additional 1.5 gallons of water to cover turkey. Let soak for 18-24 hours. See above.

TIP: Pot not big enough? No problem – use a trash bag. Put turkey in, dump brine, tie in knot and put in fridge. Not enough room in fridge? That’s OK. Take the turkey in the bag, put it in a cooler and throw some ice in it.

Rastelli recommends stuffing your turkey but the secret to a great stuffing is not to stuff your turkey until it’s going into the oven. This way, the stuffing isn’t absorbing too much of the raw turkey juices, which will make your turkey come out dry. Another tip Rastelli has is to remember that stuffed turkeys take longer to cook.

“If you are stuffing the bird, make sure to allow extra time to cook. Rule of thumb is 20 minutes per pound when cooking turkey. The truest test is a meat thermometer placed in the thickest part of the thigh. Cook to 160°, remove and let rest for 20-30 minutes, covered. That will finish the turkey to around 165 ° and allow the juices to settle so the meat stays juicy,” said Rastelli.

“My wife loves the [Spiral Ham](#), so we’ll also be having ham with creamed spinach, mashed potatoes and cranberry sausage stuffing. Our table might be smaller this year, but my appetite is still big! Plus, the best part of Thanksgiving are the leftovers,” said Rastelli.

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