

Choosing Sides

Turkey is turkey, ham is ham and, despite protestations to the contrary, both pretty much cook themselves. So if you want to knock the holiday dinner out of the park, we have one word for you: sides. And to ensure your triumph, we've gathered the chefs from the West's hottest restaurants to guide you to festive glory.

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photographs by CLINTON HUSSEY // food styling by JENNIFER STAMPER



Roasted Sweet Potato with Charred Scallion Crème Fraîche, Jalapeño and Smoked Bacon

BY PHIL SCARFONE
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3 medium-sized sweet potatoes, scrubbed
9 tbsp charred scallion crème fraîche (recipe follows)
1 jalapeño pepper, seeds removed, chopped finely
3 scallions, sliced thinly across the grain
8 slices smoked bacon
2 tbsp canola oil
Butter
Olive oil
Salt

Preheat oven to 375°F. Poke sweet potatoes all over with a fork and rub skin with salt and olive oil. Place on a parchment-lined tray. On a separate parchment-lined tray, place bacon slices in a single layer. Place both trays in oven.

When bacon is done (13 to 15 minutes), remove that tray from oven and place bacon on paper towels to absorb excess grease. While potatoes continue to cook, chop bacon finely, place back on paper towels, and set aside.

When sweet potatoes are tender (approximately 45 minutes to an hour in total), remove from oven, cool to room temperature and slice in half lengthwise.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Heat a cast iron skillet over medium heat, then add canola oil and a small knob of butter. Melt butter until it foams, add a few pinches of salt to the pan, then add sweet potatoes, flat side down. Transfer to oven and cook for approximately 8 minutes or until surface of potatoes is golden brown.

Transfer sweet potatoes to a serving dish, flat side up. Add crème fraîche to cover most of the surface of the potatoes, followed by the scallions and jalapeño pepper. Finish with bacon and some flaky sea salt. Serves 6.

CHARRED SCALLION CRÈME FRAÎCHE

1 ¼ cups sour cream
½ cup scallions
½ cup buttermilk
2 tsp parsley, chopped
1 lemon, juiced
1 tsp salt
1 tsp black pepper, toasted and ground

Preheat barbecue or grill pan to high heat. Grill scallions until char marks appear. Cool immediately and chop finely. Combine with remaining ingredients and mix thoroughly. Check seasoning, and reserve in the fridge until needed.