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### **Serving up a Christmas Winner**

*-New research out today shows mums really do make the best Christmas lunch*

“Just as good as mum makes” may be the ultimate kitchen compliment but new research out today proves that when it comes to Christmas lunch there really is no substitute for experience.

The poll of over 2,000 UK adults, commissioned by Bernard Matthews Farms, demonstrates that when it comes to a stress-free Christmas lunch, with the tastiest turkey and the fewest accidents, women over the age of 55 have got it wrapped up.

And if you're lucky enough to be dining with a mum, aunt or gran who fits this group and live in London or the South East you're in for even more of a treat as this group makes the ultimate meal, according to the research.

The findings show that:

- 86 per cent of over 55's have actually cooked a Christmas lunch compared to just half (50 per cent) of young adults (18 – 34 year olds).
- Over 55's make the fewest mistakes such as buying a turkey too big for the oven (only 8 per cent of those questioned) not defrosting the turkey before cooking (only 3 per cent) and putting the bird in the oven too late and serving lunch behind schedule (only 8 per cent)

Lorna Cousins from Bernard Matthews Farms says: “Christmas comes but once a year and cooking the lunch can be extremely daunting as the pressure is on to get it right, so it's often the same member of the family who takes on the job.

She continues: “We want to show people that it's easy to get your Christmas feast just right, including the turkey. With the help of our festive website, where you can download our **Merry Little Book of Christmas Dinners**, it's time for the next generation to take on the responsibility from their elders and give them a rest this year.”

**HOW THE OVER 55'S CONQUER CHRISTMAS:**

**It's All In The Research:**

- 42 per cent of over 55's will plan their Christmas lunch at least a month in advance including looking up recipes, writing ingredients lists and ordering the turkey

#### **The Night Before Christmas:**

- 39 per cent of over 55's will spend three and a half hours preparing for Christmas lunch before the big day, including peeling and chopping vegetables, weighing and mixing ingredients and making the turkey stuffing

#### **Tightening The Christmas Belt:**

- Equipped with years of experience, over 55's are the savviest shoppers at Christmas with 18 per cent spending only £30 on Christmas lunch
- Young adults are most likely to splash out on lunch, with five per cent admitting to spending between £300 and £500 on their Christmas lunch

#### **Cooking Up A Storm:**

- 68 per cent of over 55's will have Christmas lunch on the table within a respectable one to three hours, enabling them to spend more time with the family, knowing that everything is under control
- In contrast, almost a third of their younger counterparts (27 per cent) will spend an immense four to eight hours in the kitchen

#### **WHY YOUNGSTERS NEED TO LEARN FROM THEIR ELDERS:**

This year only a quarter of young adults (26 per cent) will be taking on the culinary challenge on Christmas Day and although a quarter of them (25 per cent) would love to give their culinary skills a chance at Christmas, they should watch and learn from the older generation as they are most likely to make mistakes, such as:

- Getting too drunk to finish the lunch (9 per cent)
- Buying a turkey too big for the oven (13 per cent)
- Putting the turkey in the oven too late and serving Christmas dinner behind schedule (15 per cent)
- Setting the smoke alarm off (25 per cent)
- Burning or cutting themselves (54 per cent)

Alternatively you can visit [www.bernardmatthewsfarms.com](http://www.bernardmatthewsfarms.com) to download their '**Merry Little Book of Christmas Dinners**' for hints, tips and recipes to help you to conquer Christmas yourself. There are also some great ideas from Marco Pierre White, celebrity chef, to make your Christmas extra special.

## Ends

For further information please contact the Bernard Matthews Farms press office at Clarion Communications on 020 7479 0910 / [bernardmatthewsteam@clarioncomms.co.uk](mailto:bernardmatthewsteam@clarioncomms.co.uk)

### Notes to Editors:

\*Survey conducted with 2,002 British adults in December 2010 by Vision Critical

### Regional Statistics:

- Whilst people in London and the South make the fewest mistakes when cooking the Christmas lunch, those in Scotland make the most.
- The Scots are most likely to forget to buy vital ingredients (18 per cent), cut themselves (24 per cent) put the bird in the oven too late and serve Christmas lunch later than planned (16 per cent), burn themselves (32 per cent) and overcook the brussel sprouts (22 per cent)
- People in the Midlands enjoy cooking the Christmas lunch the most, with 22 per cent saying they 'love' making it
- Those in the north are most likely to get too drunk to finish Christmas lunch (6 per cent) and Midlanders are most likely to forget to cook parts of the meal (11 per cent).

### Marco Pierre White's Top Turkey Tips

- Turkey should never be dry or tasteless. By breaking turkey down into individual joints you can retain more moisture in the meat
- The only time turkey becomes dry is when you overcook it! It's like steak or any other food; if you overcook it, it becomes dry
- To make the bird extra succulent try adding a little ghee (an Indian clarified butter available in Indian supermarkets)
- Keep cooking with turkey simple; breast cooked on the crown, thighs on the bone – you can keep it moist by taking care of it
- When cooking the bird in sections, try stuffing the thighs. I use a sage and onion stuffing - half dried and prepared mix and half sausage meat along with fresh sage onion and parsley.
- I don't tend to cover the turkey in foil. Keep it simple, place the glazed turkey in on the medium shelf of the oven to get it just right
- Buy a meat probe to make sure your turkey is cooked properly. The turkey will be ready when the thighs are 72°C and the breast is 66°C
- Let the turkey rest for 15-20 minutes before carving. To make sure it's just the right temperature to carve, hold your hand to the bird, if it's warm without burning it's ready