STUART'S PICK · MOHR-FRY RANCHES ZINFANDEL

ZINFANDEL TURKEY GRAVY

Gravy is the most overlooked side on the table, but a good one can make the meal. Zinfandel plays the same role in Lodi. It's the backbone of so many blends and holds its own as a single varietal. In the gravy, Zinfandel's brambly fruit and pepper stand up to dark meat. Make the stock a day ahead, and the gravy takes 15 minutes while the bird rests. It's worth the effort.

MAKES ABOUT 4 CUPS

INGREDIENTS

STOCK (MAKE AHEAD)

- 3 lb turkey wings, plus the neck and giblets (no liver)
- 1 yellow onion, quartered
- 2 carrots, cut into chunks
- 2 celery stalks, cut into chunks
- 4 thyme sprigs, 2 sage sprigs, 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp black peppercorns

GRAVY

- Pan drippings from the roast turkey
- Unsalted butter, if needed
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup Mohr-Fry Ranches Zinfandel
- 4 cups turkey stock (or store-bought low-sodium chicken stock), warm
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp chopped fresh sage
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

METHOD

1. **Make the stock.** Heat oven to 425°F. Roast the wings, neck, giblets, onion, carrots and celery on a sheet pan until deep brown, 45–50 minutes. Scrape everything into a stockpot, including the browned bits. Add the herbs, peppercorns and 12 cups cold water. Simmer gently, uncovered, 3 hours. Strain. You'll have about 8 cups.
2. **Separate the drippings.** Once the turkey is out of the pan, pour the drippings into a fat separator or measuring cup. Let stand 5 minutes. Spoon off ⅓ cup fat (top it up with butter if short) and save the juices underneath.
3. **Deglaze.** Set the roasting pan over medium-high heat. Add the Zinfandel and scrape up the browned bits with a wooden spoon. Simmer until reduced by half, about 4 minutes.
4. **Make the roux.** In a large saucepan over medium heat, whisk the ⅓ cup fat and the flour. Cook, whisking, until the color of peanut butter, 3–4 minutes.
5. **Finish.** Gradually whisk in the warm stock, then the reduced Zinfandel and the saved juices. Simmer, whisking now and then, until it coats a spoon, 8–10 minutes. Stir in the soy sauce and sage. Season with salt and pepper. Strain if you want it smooth.

MAKE AHEAD

Stock keeps chilled for 3 days or frozen for 3 months. Extra stock goes into the stuffing.