

Getting TRASHED This Christmas Doing Your Bit To Reduce Food Waste

Christmas is easily one of my favourite times of the year but as someone who champions zero food-waste I find it very difficult seeing just how much is wasted over the festive period. All too often we go crazy at Christmas and as a result, too much ends up being thrown away.

Every year we say the same thing: "We probably didn't need that; I thought everyone ate sprouts at Christmas; I wouldn't usually, but it is Christmas!; Next year we'll down size a bit.."

It is time to stop and do it this year. The most important thing about Christmas dinner is that you get the opportunity to enjoy a meal together with friends and family, celebrating what has become a really important occasion in our social calendar.

Think before you buy

Firstly, shop within in your means, tastes and desires. Don't go out and buy or make cranberry sauce if you don't like it, simply find an alternative.

If you are not confident cooking turkey then try something different. Don't assume that for one roast dinner of the year that your family and you are going to consume three times the amount of food that you normally eat when you have a roast dinner.



Consider trying a turkey crown

If you want turkey then consider getting a good crown. It will take up less space, cook a bit quicker and produce greater yield with less waste.

I understand the tradition associated with turkey at Christmas so why not ask your butcher to prep the turkey for you so you can keep the wings and legs for another day, leaving you with a beautiful crown on the bone to carve at the table.

Don't peel your vegetables

Don't peel your vegetables, classic vegetable sides at Christmas such as carrots and parsnips have fantastic edible skins that roast up really well. It will also save a job and reduce wastage. Just give them a good wash and cut into your desired size for roasting. The skins are also full of vitamin c and niacin which is a form of vitamin b3.



Don't waste your sprouts

Brussel sprouts are the marmite of the Christmas lunch, so if you are sticking with tradition why not use the leaves that are often discarded. After a good wash they can be finely chopped the day before and sautéed in a pan last minute with a pinch of chilli flakes.

Sweet tooth? It doesn't have to be a Christmas pudding

Christmas pudding is often another thing that people either love or hate. So, to avoid waste look at alternatives as there are many available, I personally like a sticky toffee pudding drowned in brandy sauce!

What To Do With Your Leftovers On Boxing Day

Cranberry ketchup

Why not make a ketchup by adding the leftover cranberry sauce to a pan with a little water, add a little vinegar and sugar to taste then blend. You can serve warm or cold with a plate of pigs in blanket or chips.

Christmas balls

Crumble your Christmas pudding into a food processor. Once blended roll into balls then roll through some desiccated coconut or crushed nuts, drizzle over a little melted left over chocolate Santa and leave in the fridge to set.

Stuffing rolls

Why not wrap your leftover sausage meat/ stuffing in puff pastry and make into a sausage roll. Bake through the oven after a little egg wash on top.

Mince pie rocking road

Collect together your left over mince pies and crumble them into a bowl – if you have kids around that need entertaining then get them involved, this is a fun one for them and they will love the final product.

Add something crunchy, such as left over nuts, that you may have brought but no one has eaten! Pour over some melted chocolate, just enough to bind the mix then push flat into a tray. Cover with more melted chocolate then leave in the fridge to set. Turn out and cut into pieces.

Boxing Day breakfast

Gather together all your left over potatoes and vegetables from lunch, crush the potatoes up and chop the vegetables down a bit if you need to. Mix them all together with an egg to help bind and season to taste. With clean hands mould into thick pancake like shapes and colour each side in a hot pan then finish cooking through the oven, top with a fried or poached egg and maybe a side of cranberry ketchup.

Top shelf level Mac & cheese!!!

If you don't have any macaroni then use any pasta as a substitute. Cook it off, cool it down, and leave to one side. Knock up a loose béchamel sauce and at the last minute crumble in your left over cheese board cheese (save some for the topping).

If you have any Christmas ham left over then chop it up and mix that in too. Fold in the macaroni and transfer to a deep cooking tray, top with more cheese then simply bake until golden and indulge.

Boxing Day hangover sprout smoothie

Yes, a brussel sprout smoothie – work with me on this one it will all make sense.

Brussel sprouts are high in nutrients, antioxidants and fibre, that will help balance your blood sugar levels. Set up a blender or any smoothie making device you may have, add your leftover cooked Brussel sprouts. Add a banana – bananas are rich in potassium, which is an electrolyte that alcohol will decrease due to dehydration. Add some honey because it's high in fructose and can help the body get rid of alcohol quicker.

The banana and honey will also make it taste better!

Blend with water for hydration, relax and enjoy the rest of the day.

Wishing you a very merry Christmas!