

Product review

Sunforest Farms organic turkey



By DOMINIC O'BRIEN

Resisting the urge to let fly (couldn't help myself) with lots of turkey jokes, I will get down to business with the review of Sunforest Farms organic turkey and leave the 'gobble-gobble' jokes alone – mostly.

Sunforest Farms is a mixed organic grower in the northern New South Wales region of Bangalow, near Byron Bay, where the rich red soil of the hinterland lends itself to quality produce and great tasting poultry.

Reviewing turkey took a bit of preparation. I had to learn how to cook it for a start. I had to find some friends willing to join me for the feast (not difficult). I had to choose a wine to accompany the meal. It's hard work I tell you.

I was given two pieces of turkey to prepare: a thigh, which we roasted; and a breast, which I decided to be adventurous with and stir-fry the next day.

Turkey doesn't have to be limited to the Christmas roast, and I found the breast to be excellent for stir-frying. It was tender, succulent, and absorbed other flavours very well. The thigh was roasted with a few simple herbs such as rosemary, thyme, sage and paprika, with pumpkin, potato and onion. The roast thigh we shared with our grateful visitors.

One thigh and a breast may not sound like a lot, but with turkey it can be. The breast alone was 1.24 kilograms and the thigh was 2.25kg. That's a big bird!

FLAVOUR The flavour of the breast was milder than the leg but still distinct and surprisingly succulent. It absorbed the flavours of the stir-fry

well and I found it to be an excellent substitute for chicken. The thigh is a noticeably darker meat with great flavour. It roasted very well, had a stronger flavour than chicken and was noticeably more succulent.

ORGANIC INGREDIENTS Just certified organic turkey. Can't get much simpler than that.

PRICE Whole birds are about \$18 a kilo, with thighs a little cheaper and breast meat a little dearer.

AVAILABILITY Sunforest Farms retails locally to a few butchers such as Wholly Smoked organic butcher in Byron Bay. It's also available through Sam the Butcher's organic stores in Sydney (see the profile of Sam the Butcher on page 10) and Cleavers retail outlets. It is sold either as moderate sized whole birds or in pieces from the bigger birds. Further enquiries can be made through the company's web site.

'NATURALNESS' Depending on supply they will be available fresh or vacuum sealed and frozen. Check with the retailers.

LABELLING Sunforest Farms turkeys carry a simple label with the necessary contact details, certification information and a short spiel about the growing methods and the region.

After gobbling down the roast (oh, come on, I had to throw one in), we were – wait for it – stuffed! I have been opened to new possibilities with turkey and from now on I'll be cooking it more often than once a year. It's a versatile meat with good flavour, especially when the quality is as good as Sunforest Farms produces.

For a bit of variety to your regular chicken dishes, or for a good old-fashioned roast, tackle a turkey – and don't wait until Christmas! ■

SUNFOREST FARMS

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