

# You can never have too many pigs in blankets at Christmas

**E**very year, around the first weekend in December, we have the same discussion at Chez Lumsden – how much turkey do we need to order for Christmas?

And every year, we can never remember what the answer was previously, we can't remember whether we go for the whole bird, or just a turkey crown, and how much bearing that has on the weight factor.

And so it came to pass last week that the turkey dimensions were called into question once more...and, no, we couldn't remember back as far as last year.

There is a clue in our



## **DICK LUMSDEN** faces up to the annual confusion over how much food to buy at Christmas

freezer though. We still have sliced turkey lurking in the bottom drawer which was waiting to lend itself to a spring curry, or maybe a turkey ham and leek pie...but has sadly become as forgotten as its original weight.

Asking the butcher is no good...he'll just ask how many people we want to feed...he won't know the size of their appetites or how many times we want to revisit the carcass.

So I turned to the internet...and specifically to some American food sites...they know their turkey right?

Conventional wisdom, I discovered, was that they recommend 1lb of turkey per person. I'm not sure if that sounds a lot or not. I wouldn't order a 16oz steak in a restaurant, I wouldn't eat 1lb of sausages in one go, and I'm not sure I could eat four hamburgers at one sitting.

Still, I suppose that's making allowances for a few pieces leftover for Boxing Day sandwiches. But hang on...according to the American version of Good Housekeeping, the 1lb of turkey meat per person is just the start. For Thanksgiving, and I quote

directly here from their list of essential ingredients, the minimum they recommend per person is 1lb of turkey PLUS 2.5lbs of assorted potatoes, green vegetables, sprouts, onions, and stuffing. That's a whopping 3.5lbs of food on each and every plate.

For Christmas in our house, you can add to that the sliced gammon, the pigs in blankets (you can never get enough pigs in blankets), roast parsnips and bread sauce. Might as well round it up to a 4lb plate each.

Then there is the weight of the liquid to be considered. For every pint of beer/cider consumed on the day there goes another 1lb. The same for every three glasses of wine. I'm not saying how much I'll drink on Christmas day, but it will definitely be more than a few shares of turkey.

Add to that the pre-dinner snacks, the post dinner Christmas pud, cheese and biscuits, trifle, mince pies, chocolates and assorted grazing, and it is safe to say that during the waking hours of Christmas Day I'm likely to eat and drink the weight equivalent of one or more small children.

Boxing Day might not be quite so

bad...but over the festive period as a whole, is it any wonder that all of us pile on the pounds and then guiltily stare January in the face, making half-hearted resolutions to cut back, cut down or cut it out?

It is quite odd, that from the beginning of October until the beginning of January each year, this country seems to be in a permanent Christmas frenzy.

21st Century Britain is a multi-cultural, multi-faith place where, for the rest of the year, political correctness runs riot and – even though we are a fundamentally Christian country – we are told not to upset other believers.

Yet the materialism and sheer gluttony displayed in the name of “Christmas” is positively encouraged and swooned over by the media and the authorities.... maybe it has something to do with the amount of money we are prepared to part with in those three mad months that has a lot to do with it.

Estimates vary, but a figure of almost £25billion has been suggested for Christmas gifts, and upwards of £4billion on food and drink. That's a lot of business and a lot of tax revenue for the



Government.

While the Muslim festival of Eid has become more important for British retailers in recent years, that, plus Diwali, Hanukkah and many other religious celebrations added together don't come anywhere close to the beanfeast of Christmas.

I'm not a religious man personally, and Christmas for me is much more about getting the family together from wherever they all live and re-connecting.

If the glue that makes that happen is turkey, pigs in blankets, copious amounts of Aspall cider, and the odd bottle of Prosecco, then I'm not going to complain.

Oh...and in case you were wondering...we have settled on a 3 kilo turkey crown to feed six of us on the big day, with cold cuts on Boxing Day....Merry Christmas.

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