

Talus Wind Ranch's

HERITAGE TURKEYS

Timothy Willms is one of a handful of ranchers across the country who are bringing back humanely raised heritage breeds, which live pretty much as they would in nature. Timothy's turkeys bear little relation to the typical factory-raised supermarket bird. His sleek Standard Bronzes and Rio Grande Wilds strut their stuff all over the enclosed pasture at his ranch, foraging and even flying when they feel like it. The vigorous outdoor living, and the fact that they grow relatively slowly, result in white meat that Timothy describes as "a beautiful soft almond" (versus pasty white). The dark meat is rich, moist, and the color of chocolate. "There's a truthfulness to them that we can taste," he says.

\$5.95/lb.; taluswindranch.com; order by Oct 31; ships within NM; pickup available in Galisteo, Mountainair, and Santa Fe, NM. For other heritage turkey sources, see page 74.



The basics of heritage turkeys

WHAT ARE THEY? Heritage turkeys are old breeds (3 of the most popular are at right) that predate the Broad-Breasted White, the standard grocery-store turkey that appeared on the scene in the 1960s. They have longer legs, much smaller

breasts (the ratio of white to dark meat is about even), and take twice as long—nearly 7 months—to mature. They live outside, not indoors in cages, and mate naturally.

HOW DO I COOK ONE? Their smaller breasts cook faster

and can dry out quickly, so drape heritage turkeys with bacon or an oiled cheesecloth, or brine them. They're easier to overcook than standard turkeys, so make sure your thermometer doesn't climb past 160° (see recipe on page 67).



STANDARD BRONZE

From wild American turkeys bred with tame European stock.



BOURBON RED

A cross of 3 heritage breeds: Jersey Buff, Standard Bronze, and White Holland.



NARRAGANSETT

Originated in 1600s; native turkeys crossed with domesticated European imports.