Apple Turkey

INGREDIENTS: A large, unbruised Red Delicious apple and a saucer or lemon juice.
TOOLS & SUPPLIES: Paring knife, 6-inch knife, wooden picks and turkey head pattern (page 140).
TIPS & TIMING: Carving time is 20 minutes. It keeps for 3 days. As ye_ work, immediately dip each cut surface in lemon juice. Store turkey with small tips of tail feathers unextended. Be sure tip of your paring knife is straight and sharp. This design has about 9 jillion cuts to make, although most are very simple. Take heart and just start; you'll be done before you know it. By the way, virtually ALL of apple is used so do refrain from snacking on it lest you inadvertently devour a wing or tail feather (which happens all too often when I teach this design just before lunch!).
USES: As a platter decoration for Thanksgiving and Christmas parties
1. Remove stem. Cut off wide end of apple in 1 smooth slice, cutting into stem depression (slice should be about 1/2 inch thick). Set this slice aside; it will become the tail.
2. Rest apple on its cut end. Place 6-inch knife across 2 bumps on top; cut down through apple, making slice for head and side wings.
3. **Head**: Lay turkey head pattern on flat side of slice from step 2. Cut straight across slice just in front of beak. Trace pattern into apple section. Wipe pattern dry and put it away. Block cut around traced head and neck. Hold your paring knife at a right angle to flat side of apple section, cut out form using a gentle pressure and steady short sawing strokes.
4. **Wattle**: Hold head with skin facing you. Trim a thin strip of skin from lower back of neck, continuing up over top of head and stop cutting only when you reach middle of top of beak; leave attached at beak. Pare fleshy side of beak to a point. Trim fleshy side of neck, smoothing edges. Fold strip over top of beak; lay head, flesh side down, so wattle is held under it. If wattle breaks off, cut a slit across top of beak; tuck 1 end of wattle into slit.
5. **Side wings**: Lay remainder of slice from step 2 flat-side down. Put your knife between 2 bumps and cut slice in half. The 2 cut sides of each of 2 half pieces you just made are left as is. Cut thin V-shaped wedges out of curved sides of these pieces where skin is touching cutting board. Remove wedges. Turn side wings over and pare away some of flesh under wing tips.
6. **Body**: Feather body in 2 steps. (A) Hold your paring knife near top of back of apple, its cutting edge facing to front (the narrow end). One-half inch in from back edge of top, cut under skin at a very shallow angle. Cut forward 1/2 inch, then dip angle of your blade deeper into apple and cut forward another 1/2 inch. Remove knife. Do this again starting just forward of end of preceding cut. Repeat these 2 cuts on upper portion of both sides of apple. In all, there are 6 cuts to this step. (B) Make skin deep slashes into each of loosened flaps of skin made in step A. The direction of these slashes is oriented toward center of front of body. In effect, step A made a cut something like a fan. Step B cuts ribs into edges of each fan. With edge of your blade, bend tips of fans (feathers) up slightly. Pour a little lemon juice into these cuts.

7. **Tail**: Hold round slice from step 1 against rear of apple. Elevate it so stem hole is 1/2 inch above top edge of body and have skin facing forward. The thick part of slice should be level with top of body. Poke a dotted line into skin of slice, following contour of back of body. Lay slice down and cut along dotted line. Position larger piece to see if it fits onto top of back edge of body. It needn’t be perfect; bottom edges may stick out a little.

8. **Tail feathers**: Lay tail piece flat side down. Using hole in its interior as a target, cut wedges into slice all around its curved perimeter. Now, this is very important; these wedges should be a good 1/2 inch long and nearly 1/4 inch wide at outer edge where skin touches cutting board. And this is even more critical: wedges do not touch each other along outside edge. There must be a rib between each wedge and these ribs should be at least 1/8 inch thick. As you cut, leave wedges in place. Do not remove them.
9. **Assembly:** Cut a small cavity out of top of body at its extreme front into which bottom of neck will fit. Push a wooden pick halfway into this cavity and slip neck down pick and into cavity. Attach each side wing with 2 wooden pick halves. Position wings so 1 fleshy side faces front and wooden picks pass through other fleshy side which is against body. To attach tail, press 2 whole wooden picks straight down into body 1/4 inch in from back edge just right and left of center. Push tail piece onto picks, seating it down on back of body. When you are ready to display turkey you then extend tail feathers made in step 7. One by one, lift each wedge out of its slot and fit it backwards back into same slot, blunt edge first. Force corners on skin side of each wedge into flesh of ribs so tips of feathers will stay put. Do so with red skin facing forward—or to rear—whichever appeals to you more.