



Let's Talk Turkey:

Thanksgiving from A to Z

by Susan Hawkins



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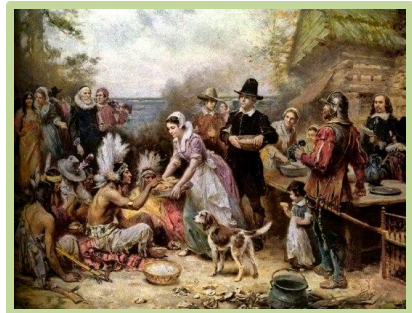
Let's Talk Turkey: Thanksgiving from A to Z!

What we're really talking about is a wonderful day set aside on the fourth Thursday of November when no one diets. I mean, why else would they call it Thanksgiving?

~Erma Bombeck, "No One Diets on Thanksgiving," 26 November 1981

When the pilgrims of Plymouth Colony and the Wampanoag Indians sat down in 1621 to break bread together, it was simply a dinner party to celebrate and give thanks for the pilgrims' bountiful fall harvest after a particularly harsh winter. All the colonies commemorated their autumn harvest with a celebration of thanks—just not at the same time.

It wasn't until October of 1777 that a specific date for all colonies was set aside for this popular American celebration. In 1789, President George Washington declared the holiday, but it was almost three-fourths of a century later, in 1863, that President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national day of Thanksgiving to be observed every year on the last Thursday of November. Why he picked Thursday is anybody's guess, but it got us two weekdays off. Thanks, Abe! You rock!



Erma Bombeck was right. Thanksgiving is a wonderful holiday—a distinct American tradition when family and friends gather to express their gratitude for our way of life, our freedom *and* for one another. Previous generations of families observed Thanksgiving in traditional fashion— a prayer of thanks before the meal, a tender, home-cooked turkey with all the trimmings, fellowship of those we love—and a one-day ban on dieting.

Over the last several decades, new traditions have emerged, like watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade on TV, watching football and serving something other than turkey for the main dish. In this Thanksgiving guide, we'll serve up some new holiday traditions, centerpiece and decorating ideas, tasty recipes and a few other fun ways to celebrate and give thanks—starting with A and ending with Z!

A

Apple Pie

Let's start with a yummy recipe for an everlasting American favorite! Warm apple pie with a dollop of vanilla ice cream is a wonderful ending for the year's most meaningful meal. This recipe is compliments of world-famous chef Jacques Pèpin, whose Rustic Apple Tart just might change the way you make apple pie forever!

Rustic Apple Tart

Prep: 45 min. Total Time: 2 hrs. Serves 6

Ingredients

½ cups plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
Pinch of salt
1 ½ sticks (6 ounces) cold unsalted butter, cut into ½ -inch pieces, plus 2 tablespoons melted
1/3 cup ice water
3 ½ tablespoons sugar
4 large Golden Delicious apples—peeled, cored and cut into ¼ -inch-thick slices
2 tablespoons melted and strained apricot preserves

Directions

1. In a food processor, pulse 1 ½ cups of the flour with the salt. Add the cold butter and process just until the butter is the size of peas, about 5 seconds. Sprinkle the ice water over the mixture and process just until moistened, about 5 seconds. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface and knead 2 or 3 times, just until it comes together. Pat the dough into a disk. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out the dough into a 16- to 17-inch round about ¼" thick.
2. Line a large unrimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Roll the dough around the rolling pin and unroll it onto the prepared baking sheet.
3. In a small bowl, combine 2 tablespoons of the sugar with the remaining 1 tablespoon of flour and sprinkle over the dough. Arrange the apple slices on top in overlapping concentric circles to within 3 inches of the edge. Fold the dough over the apples in a free-form fashion. Brush the apples with the melted butter and sprinkle with the remaining 1 ½ tablespoons of sugar. Refrigerate the unbaked tart until slightly chilled, about 10 minutes.
4. Preheat the oven to 400°. Bake the tart in the center of the oven for 1 hour, or until the apples are tender and golden and the crust is deep golden and cooked through. Brush the apples with the melted preserves. Slide the parchment onto a wire rack and let the tart cool slightly before serving.



Make Ahead

The baked tart can be stored overnight at room temperature. Reheat in a 325° oven before serving. Happy Baking—and Eating!

Appreciation



Gratitude is the heart of the holiday, and there are many ways to show it. Natalie Caine of EmptyNestSupport.com shares how her family celebrates:

“It is a time of connection and appreciation. [The whole family] dips long, salted pretzels in white and dark chocolate to use as gifts or for the road trip back home. I always read a poem, short humor story or tell a story about gratefulness as we all add on to the gratefulness that we remember from the year. The kids and some adults roll their eyes, but then the energy shifts and you can see them spinning their sweet heads to review their year.

After dinner last year, we were sitting around on the sofa and chairs, and I gave each guest an orange card stock with a pen and question ...WHAT IS ONE THING YOU WOULD DO TO MAKE SOMEONE HAPPY? WHO IS THAT PERSON? Some share their writings but they don't have to. They take them home to remind themselves of what they vowed to do in regard to happiness for others, or they can choose to make themselves happy. I have all ages, so this really works and they actually do it. [I use a] different question or different ritual each year as an element of surprise.

[We get] fresh food from the farmers market and toast [the farmers] for feeding us healthy and teaching us to grow our own food. I love this holiday and so does our family. We call each other and check out the menu so everyone still gets their favorite traditional food. My mom always cooked a chocolate pie and so do I, along with pumpkin, pecan, and apple. My college grad is a vegetarian so, yes, tofu turkey for the past years.”

B

Bed & Breakfasts

Here's a suggestion from Alice Suh for those of you who want to take a break from an extended- family-filled Thanksgiving. If the thought of basting a 20-pound turkey while entertaining distant relatives and baking the perfect pumpkin pie sounds like a holiday nightmare, enjoy Thanksgiving at a bed and breakfast. You'll find all the comforts of a welcoming home and enjoy a stress-free holiday that you'll truly be thankful for. To find a B&B in your area, along with some holiday specials, check out BnBfinder.com!

Breads

Nothing gets your nose going like the head-spinning aroma of homemade bread baking in an oven. We've uncovered a bread recipe perfect for Thanksgiving! There are a few versions of this recipe known as Amish Friendship Bread. You can serve it for your holiday dinner, after which you can give family and friends some of the starter that made it, so they can make *their*

own and pass it along to *their* family and friends. This is why the bread is called "friendship bread." Oh, by the way—it takes 10 days to make. Better get moving!

Amish Friendship Bread

Don't use any metal utensils in the preparation of this bread. Use a glass bowl and wooden spoon. DO NOT REFRIGERATE until after the 10th day.

Ingredients

1 (.25 ounce) package active dry yeast
¼ cup warm water (110° F/45° C)
3 cups all-purpose flour, divided
3 cups white sugar, divided
3 cups warm milk (110°F/45°C), divided

Directions

Day 1

In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in water. Let stand 10 minutes. In a 2-quart container (glass,) combine 1 cup flour and 1 cup sugar. Mix thoroughly or flour will lump when milk is added. Slowly stir in 1 cup milk and dissolved yeast mixture. Cover loosely and let stand at room temperature until bubbly.

Day 2 to Day 4

Stir starter with a wooden spoon.

Day 5

Stir in 1 cup flour, 1 cup sugar and 1 cup milk.

Day 6 to Day 9

Stir only.

Day 10

Stir in 1 cup flour, 1 cup sugar and 1 cup milk. Remove 1 or 2 cups to make your first bread, give three cups to friends along with the recipe. Store the remaining starter in a container in the refrigerator and begin the 10 day process over again. You can also freeze this starter in 1 cup measures for later use. Frozen starter will take at least 3 hours at room temperature to thaw before using.

NOW YOU'RE READY TO BAKE YOUR BREAD

Place the 1 or 2 cups of batter you removed to make your bread in a mixing bowl. Add the following and mix well:

1 cup oil
½ teaspoon salt



2 cups all-purpose flour
3 large eggs
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 cup sugar
½ cup milk
1 and ½ teaspoons baking powder
1 large box instant vanilla pudding powder
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 cup nuts

Optional: ½ cup raisins OR ½ cup chocolate chips, chopped up maraschino cherries, etc.

Pour mixture into two greased and sugared loaf pans. Bake at 325°F for 1 hour or until knife inserted comes clean. Cool for at least 10 minutes and remove from pans.

C

Centerpieces

What's the use of having holidays if you can't have fun creating themed centerpieces for your tables—and not just your dinner table! Don't forget your coffee table, your kitchen table and other tables or surfaces around the house.

The beauty of fall is that Mother Nature provides so many centerpiece options right outside your door or in the grocery store. For your dinner table, perhaps a cornucopia (another C!) filled with small pumpkins, squashes, maize, grapes, other seasonal vegetables and fruits, flowers, nuts in the shell and your own creativity. We have more decorating ideas under **D!**



To save time, you can purchase autumn and Thanksgiving-themed centerpieces to use year after year. Even store-bought centerpieces can be enhanced with pine cones, colorful leaves, evergreen branches, etc. to make them look a little different each time you set them out.

Cranberry Sauce

Some people love it, and some hate it, but cranberry sauce always finds a place on a traditional Thanksgiving Table. Here's a recipe from the [Blue Heron Ranch Cookbook](#), written by the mom of our friend Marcia Thompson, who says she's yet to taste one that beats it:

Blue Heron Ranch Festive Cranberry Sauce

In a medium pot combine:

8 cups fresh cranberries, *rinsed and picked over*

1 12 oz. can frozen orange juice, *undiluted*

1 cup honey

¼ tsp. cinnamon

Bring to a boil, then turn down the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Let cool before serving.

D

Decorations

There's more to decorating for Thanksgiving than centerpieces, both indoors and outdoors!

Here's a list of holiday ideas you can mix and match:

A Feast for the Eyes--Pumpkins with candles, baskets filled with gourds, leaves and flowers, pine cones and evergreen displays, pine-cone turkeys (see Kid's Crafts under **K**,) evergreen garlands on banisters, fireplaces and porch handrails, an autumn-inspired front-door wreath, haystacks. There's fun under every fall leaf!

(Editor's Note: As you know, sometimes Mother Nature lets her bugs and creepy crawlies hang out in pine cones, on leaves and branches, etc. De-bug nature's bounty before you bring it inside. Here's how: To debug your pine cones, branches, etc., place them in a plastic bag and secure tightly for about 2 to 3 days, or place them on a baking sheet lined with foil and bake on low heat for about 1 to 2 hours. Either way is effective at killing the bugs that may be lurking.)



Scents of the Season—Baking bread and pies! Turkey roasting! Cinnamon, clove, apples and oranges! Make your home smell like holiday heaven! Mull apple cider with cinnamon and orange peel. Light scented candles. Strategically place reed diffusers. It's easy to fill your home with the nostalgic fragrances of fall.

(Editor's Note: For Sounds of the Season, see M for Music.)

E

Excursions

Often, the best time to take a family vacation is during a major holiday like Thanksgiving, when you get more than one day off and, typically, family-vacation spots are less crowded and offer cost-saving specials. Resorts like Disneyworld and Busch Gardens are waiting for your Thanksgiving business.

Maybe a ski trip would be more to your liking. Bundle up and Hop a plane to a snowy mountain in the northern US for some exhilarating family fun. If cold isn't your thing, head to a beach!

F

Favors



You can kick your Thanksgiving table décor up a notch and thank family and friends for sharing the day with a favor at each place setting. [Autumn-themed favors](#) come in a variety of styles: scented soaps, coasters, tea lights and even leaf-shaped bottles of maple syrup. Why give favors? Why not? Favors are an affordable way to experience the joy of giving and to show your gratitude to guests for their presence. What's more, family and friends head home with a warm memory of your event. It's hard to believe something so small can have so large an impact, but favors definitely do.

Family and Friends

Of all the things we have to be thankful for, family and friends should top the list. We found a poem by Jill Wolf, and it may be worth sharing with those you love at the start of your Thanksgiving dinner:



*We all have a cherished garden we tend.
It is planted with love of family and friends.
The memories and dreams we treasure and share
Are like beautiful roses found blooming there.
The comfort and care on which we depend
Is given with love between family and friends.
The sunshine of laughter and rain of a tear
Only make our love grow with each passing year.
We may all be ourselves with no need to pretend
Because of the love of family and friends;
They notice the rainbows and weather the showers.*

*They overlook weeds and praise all our flowers.
The most valuable thing is the time that we spend
Tending this garden with family and friends.
When counting our blessings, we know from the start
That family and friends come first in our heart.*

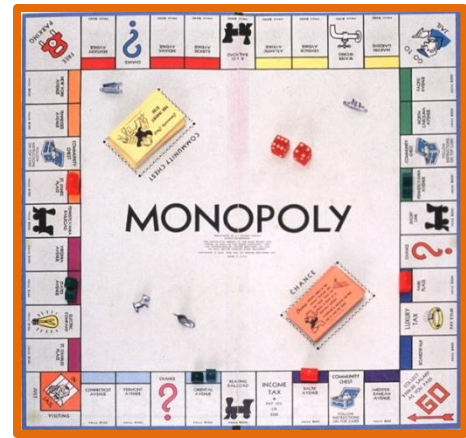
G

Games

It's not unusual to see a family playing touch football in the yard while waiting for the call to Thanksgiving dinner. It seems to us that everyone would get more benefit from the exercise *after* the meal, but for some reason, no one is in the mood. After a big meal, people tend to reach for *Monopoly*, *Scrabble*, *Apples to Apples* and other board games.

We heard about a Thanksgiving dinner-related game from Silvana Clarke, a writer whose book *Playful Parenting* will be released in 2010. She is also the "Sole Ambassador" for SolesForSoles, Inc., an organization that collects shoes from individual donors and corporate donors and distributes the shoes free of charge to people in need.

"A fun Thanksgiving experience is to divide your family and friends into two groups. Get everyone in their coats (if it's cold.) Stand outside the front door. Designate one group as "the stuffing" and one group as "mashed potatoes." The mashed potatoes start walking around the house to the left. The stuffing group heads right. Here's the fun part. As each group walks around the house, they'll eventually pass each other. The mashed potatoes group tries to make the stuffing group laugh. That means the mashed potatoes will make faces, weird noises, etc as they pass the stuffing group. In turn, the stuffing group has to keep a straight face, no smiles allowed. Do this several times as each group keeps walking around the house. Then switch roles. People get a little exercise and also lots of laughs."



H

Heirloom Pumpkins

You've probably seen them in the grocery store every fall, but you might not know they're called heirloom pumpkins. They come in lots of shapes, sizes, colors and textures, and they do more than just look seasonally cool! Beth Bader of



[The \(Ex\)Expatriate's Kitchen](#) gets her money's worth from these little jewels:

"I'm a bit crazy about heirloom pumpkins. I love the colors and textures. Every fall I buy several different ones and use them as "decor" around the house and for the Thanksgiving table. Over the season, my "decor" gradually becomes the soups and breads and other seasonal dishes, even the pie filling for Thanksgiving dinner. Most people are so accustomed to the "can" of pumpkin that they don't even know which varieties are good for eating. (Hint: you can eat ALL of the ones in this photo). It's a practical, useful, beautiful and no-waste approach to celebrating the season."

Hayride

It's believed the hayride originated in Kansas, and the hayride is simply a pleasure ride in an open truck, sleigh or wagon filled with straw or hay. During the fall, hayrides are popular with both adults and kids, who are often carted around scenic farmland or through a pumpkin patch, where they can pick out a pumpkin to take home. Hayrides at night, under a starlit sky, with couples bundled up and cuddled up, are so romantic.



Even if you live in a bustling city, you should be able to find a hayride somewhere within a reasonable driving distance at [Pumpkin Patches and More](#).

Indigestion

Thanksgiving Day often becomes Indigestion Eve, so we thought we'd find a few natural ways to help prevent indigestion before eating your Thanksgiving meal and help eliminate it if too much dinner does some damage. We found these at www.OrganicJane.blogspot.com:

There are many natural ways to prevent and ease indigestion before or after any meal, especially the grandest--Thanksgiving.

Here are some natural ways to help ease tooting, bloating and indigestion before or after a meal.

- Before your meal, eat fresh-cut pineapple. Pineapple contains an enzyme called bromelain that supports the digestive process.
- An after-dinner cup of tea can relieve gassiness and bloating. And these essential oils are calming to the intestinal tract. To make a tea, place only 3 drops of essential oils



(Roman Chamomile or Di-Gize essential oil blend) to a cup of hot water, add 1 tablespoon of agave or honey, stir well and sip slowly.

- After you've literally stuffed yourself, blend 3 drops of peppermint essential oil and 3 drops of Di-Gize essential oil blend with 1 tablespoon of carrier oil (grape seed, olive, V-6 mixing oil) and massage well on the belly. This feels soooo good. You will feel the results in as little as 10 minutes.
- Before eating, blend 1 tablespoon of Bragg's Apple Cider Vinegar in a glass of clean water and drink. The apple cider vinegar will balance the acid immediately.
- A brief, 10-minute walk around the block—after turkey—can help boost digestion, too.

J



Journal

A gratitude journal is nothing new. In fact, Oprah has talked about her gratitude journal on her show and recommends. Our friend, Jennifer Consalvo, keeps a gratitude journal, and now she has a Web site where you can go to express your gratitude, share it with others and see what others are grateful for:

“As I was often away from my family during the holidays through the years, one tradition I've kept is keeping my gratitude journal throughout the year and

then reading through it on Thanksgiving. Sometimes it's just for me, and sometimes I share some of it with those I'm with. This year I took it one step further—my partner and I created [Thankfulfor .com](http://Thankfulfor.com), so anyone can share what they are *thankful for*.

This year, we are publicly challenging everyone to write 3-5 things they are thankful for each day throughout November and December (privately or publicly,) and then tell us how it changed their holiday season. I love browsing through the public "stream of thanks" to see what others are posting—and it will surely become a new part of my own Thanksgiving celebrations.”

K

Kids' Crafts

A good part of thanksgiving fun for kids is exercising their creativity and imagination by making decorations that commemorate the holiday. And it's even more fun when you get right in there with them and make it a family experience. For great craft ideas, many of which use things your

already have at home or in your yard, go to the craft pages at Kaboose.com and FamilyCorner.com.

To get you in a craft-making frame of mind, here are instructions for making a Pine-Cone Turkey from Amanda Formaro at FamilyCorner.com:

You will need

Pinecone
3-4 each foam leaves in orange, red, yellow, green and tan
Tan "bump" chenille stem cut in half (head)
Brown "bump" chenille stem (wings)
Craft or white glue

What you do

This step you can do ahead of time, especially if you are doing this craft with a classroom or group of children. Place all pinecones on a foil lined baking sheet and cook for 45 minutes at 200 degrees F. This process will kill any insects or spider mites that may have been living in them.

Lay pinecone on its side and drip some glue into the bottom layer, then insert foam leaves into the glue. Repeat this process for 2-4 layers, depending on the size of your pinecone (ours has three layers).



Put some glue close to the front of the pinecone, then stretch the brown bump chenille stem so that it is straight. Center it over the top of the pinecone and insert it into the glue so that "arms" are sticking out both sides. Bend the ends of the stem so that they look like wings.

Insert the tan bump chenille stem in front or in the same slot as the brown stem. Bend the end of the tan stem to look like a head. See photo.

You can stand this as is or, if your pinecone is too wobbly, you may choose to hot-glue it to a piece of cardboard for stability. You can also tie a string around the body and hang it from the ceiling.

L

Lunch

Or dinner? When should you serve your mouthwatering holiday feast? Quick answer: Whenever you please, although turkey with gravy and mashed potatoes might be a little heavy for breakfast. Many people have their Thanksgiving dinner for lunch around noon, and others make it the dinner meal, around 6PM. And a whole lot of folks split the difference and chow down around 3PM—and there are a lot of good reasons to choose mid-afternoon to celebrate and give thanks. Here are just a few:



- There's plenty of time in the early part of the day to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, set the table, cook the food and visit with family and friends for a while before the meal.
- Unless the weather is inclement, it's sunny and warm enough to play a bit of touch football or do other outdoor activities.
- A 3PM dinner leaves plenty of time afterward for more indoor and outdoor activities, including the grand Christmas tree-lighting in your town.
- For those who like to get up ultra-early and hit the day-after-Thanksgiving sales, a mid-afternoon dinner doesn't stand in the way of hitting the sack at a reasonable time.

M

Music

A savvy Thanksgiving-celebration host finds ways to stimulate all her guests' senses. We've covered Sight with holiday décor, Taste and Smell with your tantalizing Thanksgiving dinner, Touch with irresistible favors and decorations, which brings us to Hearing and, last but not least, Sounds of the Season.

There are more Thanksgiving songs than you might think. Of course, there are the standard hymns you sing in church available on CDs by various artists.

But there are other options, like the peaceful melodies of Native American music and CDs featuring Thanksgiving songs by well-known artists. Check online or at a local store that sells CDs.



Life Coach Libbe HaLevy and her friends make music the focus of their Thanksgiving:

"I join with friends who are professional musicians, and we have an all-day jam session/potluck/Scrabble tournament, 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. We're in Los Angeles where the weather is still mild, so the event takes place in their rambling back yard. They have

a small stage facing a canyon and the entire community shares in their wonderful music. We also have a tradition of having a smoked, barbecued salmon in addition to a smoked turkey and at least one roasted turkey. I always bring 3 lbs. of Asian green beans, which are eagerly anticipated, and they always go. Scrabble is a recent add-on and a perfect way to end the evening. The kids get to watch selected DVDs in the living room or run around with the dogs while the adults share intelligent conversation, great food, and fabulous music. The day usually includes 40-60 people over its entire course.”

Barbecued salmon and Asian green beans sound yummy, don't they? Here are recipes for both from Find.MyRecipes.com:

Barbecued Salmon

Ingredients/Preparation

For one fillet (3 ½ to 4 lb.,) whisk together:

- 3 tablespoons melted butter
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup dry white wine,
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper



Grill the salmon, skin down on heavy foil over indirect heat, brushing with the glaze every 5 minutes, just until opaque but still moist-looking in center of thickest part (cut to test,) 25 to 30 minutes.

Asian Green Beans

Ingredients

- 1 pound fresh green beans, trimmed
- 2 green onions, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 to 3 teaspoons minced fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- ½ cup roasted sweet red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon oyster sauce
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- ¼ cup slivered almonds, toasted

Preparation

Cook green beans in boiling water 4 to 6 minutes or until crisp-tender; drain. Plunge into ice water to stop the cooking process; drain.

Sauté green onions, garlic and ginger in hot sesame oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat 1 minute. Add green beans and bell pepper; cook 1 minute. Add oyster sauce and pepper, stirring until thoroughly heated. Sprinkle with almonds. Yields 6 servings.

N

Neighbors



Be thankful for wonderful neighbors. If you've ever had a bad experience with a neighbor, you know what we mean. And Thanksgiving is a meaningful time to do something nice for your neighbors, especially the elderly and those who might be alone. Deb Bailey of PowerWomenMagazine.com magazine and radio show does something powerfully inspiring every year:

"I make either pumpkin pies or breads for all my neighbors and make extra plates of food to take to those in the neighborhood that lost a spouse and have no one to cook for them. I've been doing this for years."

Thanks for the idea, Deb!

O

Onion Casserole

The difficulty-to-rave reviews ratio is as wide a gap as you'll find when you add an Onion Casserole to your Thanksgiving menu. Easy and inexpensive to make—and a guaranteed compliment-getter! Here's a recipe from GroupRecipes.com:

Onion Casserole

Ingredients/Preparation

5 med. Vidalia or Spanish onions, sliced
1 stick (¼ lb.) butter
1 stack Ritz crackers from small-size box, crumbled
Grated Parmesan cheese



Melt butter and saute onions until limp (not brown.) (May use microwave for this step.) Place half of onions in casserole; sprinkle generously with Parmesan cheese. Add ½ of Ritz cracker crumbs. Repeat layers. Bake at 325 degrees until brown, about 20 minutes. Serves about 6-8.

P

Pilgrims

When the first Thanksgiving took place in Plymouth Colony, in present-day Massachusetts, in 1621, the menu was far from the traditional one we've come to know. Instead of turkey, mashed



Christensen/AP

potatoes and stuffing, the colonists and their neighbors, the Wampanoag Indians, feasted on water fowl (ducks and swans,) venison and fish. Their vegetables were limited to squash, beans and corn, thanks to Squanto, the famous Native American who taught the colonists how to grow them. Although they had pumpkins, pumpkin pie was still just a gleam in a pilgrim child's eye.

Parade

Talk about tradition! The 85th Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade begins at 9:00AM EST, lasts for three hours, and it's a colorful way to kick off your family Thanksgiving celebration! Fun fact: Macy's is the world's second largest consumer of helium. The United States government is the first.

Pie Day

Pie Day comes to us from Alissa Clifton, who shares a special treat with her kids the day before Thanksgiving—and on Thanksgiving Day:

“My favorite way to celebrate Thanksgiving is Pie Day. Yes, that is with capital letters because in our home it *is* a holiday. It comes the day before Thanksgiving. The kids (I have 8) look forward to it and talk about it and plan for it. We spend our day making pies for Thanksgiving. Every kid picks a favorite pie and helps to make it. Thanksgiving is fairly traditional and a nice day for the family, but Pie Day rocks!”

A pie per person? Works for us! Thanks, Alissa!

Q

Quiche

Not just any quiche! Here's a recipe from Recipe4Living.com for a Day-After-Thanksgiving Quiche that makes marvelous use of your leftovers!

Day-After-Thanksgiving Quiche

Ingredients

5 large eggs
2 ½ -3 cups leftover stuffing
1 cup shredded Swiss cheese (or any meltable cheese you have on hand)
1 cup diced cooked turkey
1/3 cup thinly sliced green onions (optional)
½ cup sliced mushrooms
1 cup half and half
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

Beat one egg, add stuffing to it and mix. Press the stuffing into the bottom of a deep pie dish or a quiche pan to make a mock-crust for your quiche. Bake on the bottom rack of the oven for 15 minutes at 425 degrees F. Sprinkle cheese evenly over the stuffing-crust. Layer in the turkey, onion, mushrooms in any order you wish. Beat remaining 4 eggs in a small bowl. Stir in the half and half. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Pour egg mixture evenly over the layers in the pan. Bake on the bottom rack of the oven for 30 minutes at 350 degrees F. Let it stand and cool for about 15 minutes to firm up before cutting and serving.

R

Relax

If you're hosting Thanksgiving, your day can either be hectic or heavenly. For a heavenly day, do your housecleaning and decorating several days before the holiday. Same goes for your Thanksgiving dinner—make what you can a day or two before Thanksgiving, so all you have to do is warm and serve. This holiday won't be fun for you if you have to spend it in the kitchen instead of with family and friends. Carve out the time to relax and enjoy the day. Leave the dishes for tomorrow, unless you get volunteers to do them for you after the meal. Now *that's* something to be thankful for!

Rituals

Holiday traditions are dynamic—they're not etched in stone. If you don't like a particular family tradition, replace it with a new tradition. It's that simple. Some of the best rituals are ones that teach your children to reflect on their own lives and think of others, like these from FamiliesWithPurpose.com:



Take advantage of the fall leaves to build a **Tree of Thanks**. Send the kids to the back yard for a tree branch and some fallen leaves. Plant the branch in a pot filled with craft sand. As family members arrive for Thanksgiving dinner, let the kids give each person either a real leaf or a cut out leaf from paper and ask the guests to write something on the leaf for which they are thankful. Use either paperclips or Christmas tree ornament hangers to hang the leaves on the branch.

S

Stuffing



Yes, there's a difference between stuffing and dressing—not in the ingredients, but in the preparation. Stuffing must, by its very definition, be stuffed, pushed, jammed, heaped, packed into and surrounded by the cavity of a bird or between two halves of the same piece of meat. The stuffing gets cooked along with the turkey in the oven, after which the stuffing must be taken out of the cavity and placed in a pan for presentation and serving. Dressing is made in a pan and goes directly onto

the plate. Is there a difference in taste? Die-hard stuffers will tell you that the only way to get the unrivaled flavor from the internal turkey droppings is to stuff. Two more pros: stuffing ensures a properly moist dish and it conserves valuable oven space. Stuffing is also more labor-intensive than dressing. The choice is yours.

Save a Turkey

More than 50 years ago, President Harry S. Truman was the first President of the United States to pardon a turkey and spare his life—another distinctly American tradition. Still, the outlook isn't good for millions of other turkeys this time of year. Some benevolent people like Meredith Turner of FarmSanctuary.org are hoping to save a few more turkeys:



“Every year my family saves a life for Thanksgiving by “adopting” a turkey through Farm Sanctuary’s *Adopt-A-Turkey Project*. We place the adoption certificate on the center of our dining room table—in place of a real turkey—and feel good knowing that we are celebrating a compassionate Thanksgiving.”

Meredith's Thanksgiving dinner is "a completely vegan Thanksgiving meal, meaning no animal products (meat, milk, dairy or eggs) are used to prepare my family's Thanksgiving meal."

*(Editor's Note: This organization goes beyond just saving the turkey from the chopping block! According to their Web site: "For those who would like to provide a lifelong home for rescued turkeys, Farm Sanctuary staff will personally deliver turkey companions to approved adopters via the *Turkey Express*, an annual adoption event that has enabled the organization to place more than 500 rescued turkeys into safe, permanent and loving homes throughout the country.")*

T

Turkey

Well, we just *had* to go with turkey for the letter T, because some turkeys are destined to become the centerpiece of many a Thanksgiving table. Instead of offering just one of dozens of ways to cook a turkey, we thought we'd help you learn more about the turkey and Thanksgiving with a fun trivia quiz for adults *and* kids from Home.Aristotle.net:

See next page for printable Thanksgiving Trivia!

Turkey Trivia Quiz

1. When was the first Thanksgiving celebration?
 - 1492
 - 1567
 - 1621
 - 1777
2. Where was the turkey first domesticated?
 - Canada
 - Mexico and Central America
 - New Zealand
 - India
3. What is a female turkey called?
 - a rooster
 - a cuckoo
 - a chick
 - a hen
4. What is a male turkey called?
 - a larry
 - a clark
 - a harry
 - a tom
5. What great American statesman lobbied to make the turkey the national symbol?
 - Benjamin Franklin
 - Thomas Jefferson
 - John Adams
 - Andrew Jackson



6. What sound does a female turkey make?

- gobble
- cluck
- chirp
- peep

7. What sound does a male turkey make?

- gobble
- click
- chirp
- peep

8. About how many feathers does a mature turkey have?

- 1,500
- 2,000
- 3,500
- 5,000

9. Which state produces the most turkeys annually?

- Kansas
- Ohio
- Arkansas
- Minnesota

10. How fast can wild turkeys run?

- 5 mph
- 15 mph
- 25 mph
- 45 mph

11. How does Arkansas rank among the other states in turkey production?

- first
- third

- eighth
- fourteenth

12. What Native American tribe celebrated the first Thanksgiving with the colonists?

- the Wampanoag tribe
- the Sioux tribe
- the Choctaw tribe
- the Arapaho tribe

13. Can wild turkeys fly? If so, how fast?

- No.
- Yes, up to 25 mph
- Yes, up to 40 mph
- Yes, up to 55 mph

14. Approximately what percentage of American homes eats turkey on Thanksgiving?

- 49%
- 67%
- 82%
- 90%

15. Approximately what percentage of American homes eats turkey on Christmas?

- 34%
- 50%
- 67%
- 89%

16. What is the name of the skin that hangs from a turkey's neck?

- snark
- wattle
- garble
- swag

17. Which U.S. president specified that Thanksgiving would fall on the last Thursday of November?

- Martin Van Buren
- Andrew Jackson
- William H. Taft
- Abraham Lincoln

18. Which president attempted to move the Thanksgiving holiday to the fourth Thursday in November to create a longer Christmas shopping season?

- Franklin D. Roosevelt
- Dwight D. Eisenhower
- Harry S. Truman
- Gerald R. Ford

19. Which country consumes the most turkey per year per capita?

- The United States
- Israel
- Spain
- The United Kingdom

20. What is the best way to defrost a turkey?

- with a hair dryer
- in the refrigerator
- in cold water
- in the microwave oven

Here are the results of the trivia quiz:

1. When was the first Thanksgiving celebration?
1621
2. Where was the turkey first domesticated?
Mexico and Central America
3. What is a female turkey called?
A hen
4. What is a male turkey called?
A tom
5. What great American statesman lobbied to make the turkey the national symbol?
Benjamin Franklin
6. What sound does a female turkey make?
Cluck
7. What sound does a male turkey make?
Gobble
8. About how many feathers does a mature turkey have?
3,500
9. Which state produces the most turkeys annually?
Minnesota
10. How fast can wild turkeys run?
25 mph
11. How does Arkansas rank among the other states in turkey production?
Third
12. What Native American tribe celebrated the first Thanksgiving with the colonists?
The Wampanoag tribe
13. Can wild turkeys fly? If so, how fast?
Yes, up to 55 mph
14. Approximately what percentage of American homes eats turkey on Thanksgiving?
90%

15. Approximately what percentage of American homes eats turkey on Christmas?
50%

16. What is the name of the skin that hangs from a turkey's neck?
Wattle

17. Which U.S. president specified that Thanksgiving would fall on the last Thursday of November?
Abraham Lincoln

18. Which president attempted to move the Thanksgiving holiday to the fourth Thursday in November to create a longer Christmas shopping season?
Franklin D. Roosevelt

19. Which country consumes the most turkey per year per capita?
Israel

20. What is the best way to defrost a turkey?
In the refrigerator

U

United States of America

Those of us lucky enough to live in the United States have much to be thankful for, but so do people in other countries. In fact, thanksgiving celebrations have been held for thousands of years all over the world. Find out more at <http://www.holidays.net/thanksgiving/story.htm> .

V

Volunteer

There's no more rewarding way to celebrate Thanksgiving than to volunteer your time and energy sharing the holiday and making it special for people who would not otherwise be able to celebrate. Organizations like the Salvation Army, homeless shelters, churches and synagogues either host Thanksgiving dinners for the homeless, the elderly, etc. or have information about volunteer opportunities throughout their communities. You'll be amazed how a simple meal, your smile and a few kind words give these people something to be thankful for.

W

Weight-Watching

Good luck with this. Seriously. If you're normally good about watching your weight throughout the year, you'll either 1) carry it through Thanksgiving or 2) recognize that you've earned one day of overindulging and will get back on track quickly. If you don't count calories or have to watch your weight, enjoy.

Then there are those of us who aren't obsessed with healthy eating habits but have a hard time with the after-Thanksgiving guilt. Here are a few tips from Clarian Bariatrics that might keep you from overfeeding and, ultimately, ease the guilt:

1. Don't skip meals before the big meal or holiday party. (In fact, you might want to eat a little something healthy and filling prior to the Big Meal to reduce your hunger.)
2. Offer to bring a favorite low-calorie dish to holiday parties. There are lots of holiday foods that are low-fat and low-calorie but still crowd pleasers!
3. Have a plan of what and how much you will eat before you attend the function and keep portions small.



4. Remember—eat your calories and avoid drinking calories.
5. Make exercise part of your holiday and shopping experience. Park as far away from the stores and malls as you can, so you're forced to walk and burn some extra calories. Try to exercise at least 30 minutes per day during the holidays.

X

Xmas

Only a month away! Take advantage of those super after-Thanksgiving sales!

Y

Yams

Sweet potatoes are a crowd-pleaser, depending on how they're prepared. This is one of the best Thanksgiving sweet-potato casserole recipes you'll ever find. It's indulgent, incredible and your company's eyes will pop out when they take their first bite. It won't be their last! We thank the famous [Smith House Restaurant](#) in Dahlonega, GA for coming up with this deliciously decadent dish, which you can find in their wonderful cookbook, *Boarding House Reach*:



Company Sweet Potatoes

Ingredients

3 Cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes
1 Cup sugar
½ Cup milk
1/3 Cup butter
2 Eggs
1 Tsp. vanilla

Topping

1 Cup coconut
1 Cup chopped nuts
1 Cup brown sugar
1/3 Cup flour
1/3 Cup butter, melted

Directions

Mix sweet potatoes, sugar, milk, butter, eggs and vanilla. Pour into baking dish. Mix coconut, nuts, brown sugar and flour. Add melted butter. Sprinkle mixture over potatoes. Bake at 375 degrees until brown, about 25 minutes.

Z

Zinfandel

What beverage or beverages should you serve with your Thanksgiving dinner? The field is wide open: water, hot tea, iced tea, sodas, mulled cider for the kids, and for the adults, a glass of beer or wine. Beer is beer, but it requires a bit of research to determine which wines go best with turkey. About.com helped us out with this tricky topic:

Best White Wine Options

Sauvignon Blanc – a crisp white wine that is noted for its earthy, herbaceous flavors – a prime candidate specifically for turkey and herb-filled stuffing.

Viognier – a white wine with low levels of acidity and characterized by light floral flavors often surrounded by delicate touches of peaches and pears.

Riesling – a white wine that may either be bone dry or fairly sweet, excellent with any dishes that may have a bit of spice to them.

Gewurztraminer– another white wine that may present itself dry or sweet, depending on the style. This wine has a zestiness that allows it to pair nicely with side dishes that may have a bit more kick to them, but also settles well with a variety of dessert options.

Top Red Wine Options

Pinot Noir – this red wine is a traditional favorite for Thanksgiving. It is easy going enough to complement just about any flavor you can throw at it.



Zinfandel – a red wine that ups the intensity from a Pinot Noir, but still maintains a balancing effect on many traditional side dishes. This would be a great pick for those looking for a heartier wine with deeper flavors.

Syrah/Shiraz – another red wine that picks up the intensity and flavor, yet graciously handles the cornucopia of flavors in a traditional Thanksgiving meal. The peppery notes will accent a flavorful helping of stuffing as well as both the white and dark turkey meats.

Beaujolais Nouveau - a light, fruity red wine that goes very well with turkey and all of the fixings. This wine is released from France on the third Thursday of November, just in time to highlight your Thanksgiving feast!

That's 26! Go forth and have a memorable Thanksgiving!
