

*How to Dance Through Thanksgiving
2009*



*Put out a great dinner
that everyone will love
Be the calm and together hostess
And most important - Enjoy Your Day!*

*Written for you by
Carole Pagan*

[Main Blog - CommonSenseLiving.com](http://CommonSenseLiving.com)

[Healthy eating made delicious and easy - Rebel With a Fork](#)

[Get your house clean fast - and keep it that way - Secret Confessions of a Clean Freak](#)

Thanks for downloading this free report. I hope it helps you have a wonderful Thanksgiving Day.

You are free to pass this report on to anyone you wish, as long as it remains intact. You cannot charge for it though. Let's pass it on in the spirit of giving!

In this report you will find-

- ..Things you can start doing now to take the load off.
- ..Housecleaning plan
- ..Shopping lists
- ..Menu planning
- ..Checklists
- ..Recipes
- ..Resources

I don't know about you, but I like to work smart, not hard. I don't want to work any harder than the next guy. But, I like superior results. When it comes to Thanksgiving dinner, I want a memorable day and rave reviews.

The other good news? When it's done right, it really is a pretty healthy meal. Seasonal favorites like turkey, cranberries, sweet potatoes, carrots, and pumpkin are all very good for you. If I had my way, I'd skip putting out the mashed potatoes, bread and rolls, and corn – but you gotta have them for some people. You can't force anyone to eat better. Just put out the good foods and hope they'll make the right choices. I know you will!

If you would like to learn more about what the 'Super Foods' can do for your health – how to eat healthy even if you're insanely busy, how to eat for optimal health, and steal some of my best recipes - Check out "[Rebel With a Fork](#)" There's a lot of delicious food that's actually good for you!

If you've suffered through too many dry turkeys, or you've never made a turkey before in your life - you're going to learn how to make a great moist turkey. You'll never want to eat anyone else's turkey. Which means like me, you'll be doing Thanksgiving dinner forever more – but it's ok. You'll know how to dance through it!

So let's get started!

Thanksgiving...

Visions of a table full of delicious looking food that looks like it came right out of Better Homes and Gardens. Family and friends gathered around anxiously awaiting the go ahead to dig in to the scrumptious feast that you have put out, and by the way... "You look Great! How do you do it all?"

I'm going to help you breeze through this Thanksgiving. How would that be? Here is a plan for the 3 weeks before Thanksgiving to help you glide through the holiday stress free.

Oh, don't worry. You know me. We're not going to work hard. We're going to work smart! Little things and a good plan.

Before we get to the plan - I'm here to bust an old myth.

Everyone is always all stressed out over eating Thanksgiving dinner. All that food, all those calories, so much fat, yada, yada, yada.

Baloney! This is one great opportunity to stuff your family with tons of good for you foods, and they won't suspect a thing.

That's right. I'm here to tell you that Thanksgiving dinner is one of the healthiest meals of the year. Now doesn't that ease your guilty conscience a bit?

Don't believe me? OK, lets take a look at the most traditional Thanksgiving dinner foods -

Almonds

Used since the middle ages to relieve heartburn. A one-and-a-half ounce handful of almonds, is a great source of antioxidants, vitamin E and magnesium and contains protein, fiber, potassium, calcium, phosphorus and iron. Almonds and other nuts contain phytochemicals -that have been shown to protect against heart disease, stroke, and other chronic diseases. The following nuts are included in the new claims: almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts and peanuts. Almonds contain ALA, and can reduce cholesterol as well as prescription drugs and reduce triglycerides. Almonds contain more calcium than any other nut. Nuts also contain LArginine, which helps reduce blood clotting that causes clogged arteries, helps your body repair tissue, and supports your immune system.

Vitamin E and C have been shown to reduce your number of colds.

Throw some in your fresh green beans!

Broccoli

High in fiber, vitamin c, vitamin A, carotenoids, calcium, and folic acid. The isothiocyanates stimulate the liver to break down pesticides and other carcinogens. (colon cancer) Cruciferous vegetables contain sulforaphane which is said to not only prevent changes that can lead to cancer in breast cells, but also has been found to stop the growth of malignant breast cells by stopping the cancer cell's ability to divide. A famous John Hopkins study in 1992 found that broccoli helped prevent the growth of tumors, and reduced the size of the tumors that did grow by up to 75%. The catch here is that to release the sulforaphane, the broccoli must be lightly steamed for 3 to 4 minutes.

Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts) help to remove excess estrogens from your body. See the Warning under Soy to learn why this is important.

Broccoli also contains alpha-lipoic acid, or A.L.A., which strengthens cell metabolism of liver and heart cells making them better able to withstand our abuse.

Broccoli is also high in magnesium. Magnesium deficiency is linked to eyesight problems, bone loss, heart disease, colon cancer, and even MS.

Broccoli also contains indole-3-carbinol, which makes it harder for estrogen to bind to breast tissue, which reduces monthly type breast pain.

With the exception of releasing sulforaphane, broccoli is best eaten raw. It has the most nutrients if you let it sit a few minutes after cutting. Sounds weird, but cutting releases an enzyme. Same is true for garlic.

Carrots

Carrots are famous for Carotenoids for reducing risk of heart disease and skin cancer. New studies show they're not as effective as previously thought in preserving eyesight. Has been used in many cultures to reduce menstrual pain. Carrot juice helps to relieve diarrhea.

Chocolate

Natural mood enhancer, now also thought to help reduce risk of heart disease and high blood pressure (maybe something to do with being in a good mood?). Dark chocolate contains a high amount of Flavonoids - antioxidants that fight heart disease, reduce plaque build up in arteries, reduce blood pressure, and increase good cholesterol.

Dark chocolate also contains trace amount of A, B1, C, D, and E, iron and magnesium. Chocolate also contains L-Arginine which helps reduce blood clotting that causes clogged arteries, helps your body repair tissue, and supports your immune system.

Choose higher quality for lower fat and sugar content. 1 ounce of dark chocolate has 10 times more antioxidants than a strawberry.

But strawberries dipped in dark chocolate would cover all the bases, wouldn't it? .

Coffee

Good news! Coffee seems to prevent type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's. It reduces your risk of colon cancer by keeping you regular. Research says it reduces the risk of kidney stones, though my sister who is a heavy coffee drinker still had kidney stones. Coffee contains theophylline which acts as a bronchodilator-, which helps asthma symptoms. It may also help prevent cirrhosis of the liver, skin cancer and gallstones.

Coffee contains a multitude of nutrients – riboflavin, potassium, magnesium, zinc, niacin, folate, sodium, thiamin, protein, calcium, and vitamin k. Coffee is full of anti-inflammatory antioxidants, and for many people, coffee is their main source of antioxidants.

Coffee can cause anxiety, headaches, heartburn, high blood pressure, yellow teeth, and possibly heart attacks, so be aware of your sensitivity to caffeine. If caffeine sends you bouncing off the walls, increasing your coffee intake would not be a good idea for you.

Corn

Ok, for years I considered corn a non-food, but now it appears that canned corn, or steamed fresh corn contain a phytochemical called ferulic acid, which may help prevent cancer. The antioxidants are released once the corn is exposed to heat. The study did not mention frozen corn. Canned corn was shown to contain 44% more antioxidants than raw corn. Except now they're saying that the new plastic liners used in cans leech chemicals into the food. So steamed fresh corn is your healthiest choice.

A former school nurse just informed me that corn and beans form a complete protein – for the vegetarians.

Cranberries

One of my favorite Super-Foods! You already know to drink cranberry juice when you have a urinary tract infection. Cranberry juice flushes bacteria that causes urinary tract infections.

But did you know that cranberries reduce cholesterol, help reduce dental plaque, and the bacteria that cause stomach and intestinal ulcers.

Cranberries also contain flavonoids called oligomeric proanthocyanidins or OPCs. These help stop the oxidation of bad cholesterol. They may also help prevent plaque build up in the arteries, which helps ward off heart disease, stroke, and varicose veins. Cranberries have the highest antioxidants of any fruit.

And antioxidants help keep your skin looking great.

Lemon

The smell of lemons calm you. They are thirst quenching. High in Vitamin C. In the south, they used a slightly salted lemonade to quench thirst and replace salt lost through perspiration.

I found pages and pages on the lemon- keeps your liver functioning properly, helps asthma, colds, flu, rheumatism, constipation, diarrhea, dissolves uric acid, removes bacteria, cleanses the system of impurities, contains calcium, potassium, phosphorus and magnesium, reduces hemorrhage, (including heavy menstrual flow), reduces heart palpitations, soothes heartburn, soothes sore throats when mixed with honey, reduces fever ... and that's just the high points.

Lemons also contain a compound called flavones, which reduce your risk of breast cancer.

I will be squeezing fresh lemon into all our water pitchers a lot more often. My daughter loves it. Must be fresh lemon. Bottled juice does not contain the same qualities.

Olive Oil

Can reduce cholesterol. Contains oleic acid - which reduces cellular inflammation. Saturated fats on the other hand, such as butter – increase cellular inflammation, which cause a whole slew of ugly chain reactions. The one you'll notice the most is that they drain your energy.

Heating olive oil takes away it's nutritional benefits, but it's still healthier than using saturated fats to cook with.

In Italy, they dip their Italian bread (French and Italian bread is lower in fat than white bread to begin with) in olive oil mixed with herbs, and maybe some Parmesan cheese. Yummy!

Why not go right to the source and put out a variety of olives?

Pickles

The vinegar in pickles can reduce your blood sugar spikes after meals. It can also help you lose weight by preventing your body from digesting some carbohydrates.

Potatoes

High in potassium and antioxidants. You know, it's what you put on it that makes it unhealthy.

Pumpkin

Pumpkin contains Lutein, which reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke, and age related macular degeneration. And its orange, so you know it contains carotene.

Sage

Improves memory, behavior, and attention. When combined with Lemon Balm it improves memory and mood. Sage is helpful in managing symptoms of Alzheimer's disease.

Sweet Potato

It's orange, so you know it's full of beta-carotene – which you know is converted into vitamin A, which is good for eyes and skin. Also high in vitamin C, carotenoids, potassium, and fiber.

Turkey

Very high in protein! High in selenium which helps repair DNA damage to your cells, regulates your thyroid, and strengthens your immune system. High in niacin and B6 to help your heart, and helps all of the functions that regulate sugar in your system. And it's low in fat.

Walnuts

A healthy fat source. Also contains alpha-lipoic acid, or A.L.A., which strengthens cell metabolism of liver and heart cells making them better able to withstand our abuse, and helps to reduce triglycerides. Nuts also contain L-Arginine, which helps reduce blood clotting that causes clogged arteries, helps your body repair tissue, and supports your immune system. But only a handful – nuts are high in calories.

Wine

Some varieties contain a cholesterol fighting chemical called saponins. Zinfandel has been found to have the highest saponins. All wines, when limited to about 5 glasses a week, helps raise good cholesterol. Good cholesterol helps your body get rid of the bad cholesterol.

Red Wine also contains resveratrol – a compound that blocks a key protein that cancer cells need to survive – actually starving them to death.

And it does the same thing for colds and flu viruses. I can personally attest to this. If you're feeling like you're coming down with something, have a glass of wine and get 8 hours sleep.

Warning! Drinking alcohol on an empty stomach can raise blood pressure by as much as 40%.

Whew! And that's not to mention onions, parsley, nutmeg, tea, strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, green beans, cinnamon, or many other foods that you might traditionally serve. They're all good for you!

You didn't know healthy eating was so great, did you? You can stuff your family full of vitamins and they won't suspect a thing!

This is just a small taste of what you'll find at [Rebel With a Fork](#) where you'll find more truths about delicious healthy eating!

On to the plan - Let's start easing in....

3 Weeks Before – November 1, - November 8

In the next few days you need to:

>Write out your guest list.

>Plan your menu.

>Touch base with people to find out how many are actually coming. Assign them each something to bring. Even if it's pop, wine, napkins, can of whipped cream, coffee, whatever. Every little bit helps.

>Make 2 shopping lists.

The first list is dry goods, canned goods, etc. Stuff that can be bought ahead of time.

The second list will be fresh items, the things that need to be bought just a day or two before.

Don't forget that if you buy a frozen Turkey, you have to let it thaw in the fridge for about 3 days. Plan accordingly.

>Buy the items on the first list now.

>Order any other special order stuff. Desserts, etc.

>Do all of the heavy laundry this week. Tablecloths, napkins, etc.

Make sure the sheets and plenty of towels are ready. Even if you don't anticipate out of town guests, this is a good move anyway. You never know when people may end up staying. It gets late. Too much drinking. Bad weather....

>Start doing a thorough cleaning. If you need help getting through this quickly – [check out HowtoCleanHouseFast.com](http://HowtoCleanHouseFast.com) for a step-by-step easy plan.

>Do you have enough silverware? Drinking glasses? Chairs?
Get what you need now.

There-now. You're off to a good start. Don't you feel better already?

Need help with a menu? Here's mine for this year.

(average 12 people)

24 lb. Turkey
Stuffing
Gravy
Mashed potatoes
Mashed Sweet Potatoes with Toasted Marshmallow topping
Glazed carrots,
Green bean casserole
Corn casserole
Cranberry Sauce
Cranberry/Walnut jello mold
Croissants (or rolls)
Pickles, olives
Green onions
Radishes
Birthday Cake (my daughter's birthday is on the 25th)
Pumpkin Pie (someone else brings this)
Lemon Meringue Pie (only if sister comes and brings it)

Just an observation from my many years of doing this- the overweight people eat the mashed potatoes and barely touch the vegetables. The thin people barely touch the potatoes or bread - they can have those anytime. They fill up on the good stuff - not the boring mundane stuff. And last year, the mashed potatoes and bread were hardly touched!

When else can you load people up on all these healthy foods? And they love it! Turkey, sweet potatoes, cranberries, carrots, green vegetables ... Heck, everything on this dinner plan except the stuffing, gravy, and desserts is good for you.

If you would like to learn more about what the 'Super Foods' can do for your health - [Join us at Rebel With a Fork >>>](#) Getting healthy is more fun than you thought, isn't it?

So here is my shopping list for this week:

Foil Roasting Pan (cook and toss)
Aluminum Foil
2 bags, Brownberry Stuffing (yeah, I cheat here)
4 packages French's Turkey Gravy mix. For homemade gravy- Cornstarch or flour.
It's a good idea to have mix on hand, just in case! Laureys is full of icky stuff.
Bag of Marshmallows
Brown Sugar
1 bag slivered almonds
Large bag of Green Beans (for green bean casserole.)
2 packages frozen cranberries
1 can Fried Onion Rings
2 cans mushroom soup
1 cans corn
1 can cream style corn

2 cans Black olives
1 jar green olives
5 lbs. of Butter (I know. Any left can be used for cookies)
Box of Ritz Crackers (for Corn casserole)
Can of Whipped Cream (it will hold up fine)
Lemon Juice for lemonade
Wine
Coffee
Flavored Creamers
Dinner Napkins
Dish Soap
Paper towels
Toilet Paper

Also check bath soap, shampoo and toothpaste. You don't want to run out of these things if people stay over. I like to have a couple of extra toothbrushes on hand too.

If you want to be a really great host/hostess, go to the sample size aisle and buy small deodorants, mouthwash, etc. for guests to use.

Note: Someone else usually brings the jello mold and pies.
I order the croissants and birthday cake. I used to make all the desserts too, but then I got smarter ;-)

Now if you've been on my list for a few years, this menu looks pretty familiar. Whenever we start talking about Thanksgiving dinner, everyone starts bringing up their favorite dishes. If you don't have it for them, they're going to be upset. They want their favorites, so don't upset the apple cart!

We've had people try trendier things – spicier turkey, weird stuffings, fried turkey, and so on. It doesn't fly. Don't beat yourself up trying to come up with something new and different.

The green bean casserole and the corn casserole call for more canned goods than I would like. I'll actually pick 2 or 3 vegetable dishes depending on how many people are coming.

So what does that leave for the next shopping list? Not much:

Turkey
Bag of baby carrots
4 - 6 Large Sweet Potatoes
5 lb. bag of potatoes
Green onions
Radishes
Milk
Eggnog

Next week we will go through a day-by-day schedule to keep you on track.

Just think, this year you can actually enjoy dinner!

Week 2

Did you finish everything from part one last week? I didn't think so.

That's OK, but let's recap what needs to be done by next Friday if you are going to keep your stress levels down.

>Finalize your menu.

>Touch base with people to find out how many are actually coming.

>Assign them each something to bring. Even if it's pop, wine, napkins, can of whipped cream, coffee, whatever. Every little bit helps. Just make sure that you can count on the person you've assigned it to.

>Buy dry goods, canned goods, etc. Stuff that can be bought ahead of time.

>Order any other special order stuff. Desserts, etc.

>Finish up housecleaning and laundry. Have house prepared for possible overnight guests. You never know.

>Do you have enough silverware? Drinking glasses? Chairs?
Get what you need now.

>Get all of the good dishes and glass-ware washed.

Don't you feel like you should be running around more?
Seems too easy, doesn't it?

Just make sure you have finished these tasks. The last few days will be a lot easier than you ever imagined, if you just stick with the plan.

Next week we will go through a day-by-day, and even a step-by-step schedule to get that dinner on the table in style

So how are you feeling? In control?

Isn't it great?

Time to dance.

Week 3

The Count Down Begins

The Weekend Before

Finish shopping except for anything that needs to be absolutely fresh. If you are serving any raw vegetables, you want to buy those later. Same goes for breads and rolls.

If you don't have a feather duster, or some pledge Wipes or something like that, get some.

If you haven't ordered bakery items, do it now!

Give the house a really good cleaning so all you have to worry about is picking up and touching up.

Wednesday night-

Cut up any fresh vegetables. Put in the refrigerator in zip lock bags. Or in the case of celery or carrots, put in water. Especially if you make the fancy curly cuts, radish roses and such. The cold water actually makes the curls happen.

Potatoes can be cut and placed in cold water in the refrigerator too.

Make any salads, jello molds, deviled eggs... stuff like that.

Make sure desserts are completed.

Put tablecloth on the table. Set out dishes and silverware. Cover with a towel to keep clean.

Check to make sure turkey is almost thawed.

Wash turkey roaster. I use a foil roaster and just pitch the whole mess when we're done.

Get a good night's sleep.

We're getting down to the wire! Not to worry though, you have it under control.

The shopping is done.

You've done a thorough housecleaning.

The baking is either assigned, or done

Now we ease into the final stretch

Print out these checklists and keep them handy to keep you on track!

Wednesday night -

____ Finish any baking.

____ Make sure turkey is thawing nicely. If not, put it in the kitchen sink in cold water for a couple of hours. Move it back into the fridge before going to bed. DO NOT leave it out.

____ Wash the good dinner dishes, silverware, and glasses. Put them on the dining room table. Don't forget serving dishes and coffee servers. Cover with towels so they will stay clean.

____ Make any jello molds and cold salads.

____ Cut up any fresh vegetables. Store in zip lock bags.

____ If you make your stuffing from scratch, prepare bread.

____ Do a once over on the house. Vacuum, dust, wipe down the bathroom.

____ Get a good nights sleep.

I know, a lot of people make more ahead and reheat. To me, that's like eating leftovers!

Thursday Morning

Here is the real test of character. Getting the big meal prepared and on the table and still having enough energy to enjoy it!

Here we go-

The time you have to get up depends largely on the size of your turkey. I cook a 24 lb. turkey. It has to be in the oven by 9 for dinner around 4. 15 minutes per lb. If you have dinner earlier, people will be hungry again. Besides, this way, we get to watch the sunset over the lake.

I'm not a morning person, so I get up at 7 so I can putter and wake up. Have to have my coffee and quiet time. Do check to make sure the turkey is thawed. If not, put in a clean sink filled with cool water to finish thawing.

8 am-

___ Turn on oven.

___ Wash turkey inside and out. Clear water only!

___ Prepare stuffing.

___ Stuff Turkey.

___ Put in roasting pan. If you are using a foil pan, place a large cookie sheet under it for support. It will be easier to maneuver.

___ Coat turkey with melted butter. I use at least ½ lb. at this point.

___ Put turkey in oven uncovered. (I know, everyone else tells you to cover it first.

Try it my way. You will never have dry turkey again!)

___ Peel potatoes.

___ Put them in pot of water.

You don't have to cook them just yet.

___ Peel sweet potatoes.

___ Put them in pot of water.

___ Check Turkey every half hour. Baste. Most of our ovens don't cook evenly.

You may have to turn the turkey every so often to brown it evenly.

Geez, it's only 9:30, take a break!

___ Are the wine and pop in the fridge? No room? If you live in a colder climate, put them outside. Otherwise, move them to a cooler.

___ Prepare sweet potato dishes. They will reheat nicely. Don't put the marshmallows on yet.

___ Put carrots in pot of water. (If you use baby carrots, you won't have to peel and cut up.) Boil until tender. Drain.

Glaze with butter and brown sugar.

___ Put Cranberries, olives, and so forth, into their serving dishes.

Cover with saran.

___ Check turkey. Only when it is nicely, evenly brown do you cover it.

Cover roasting pan with cover, or if you are like me and use a foil pan, cover pan completely and securely with foil.

___ Set table.

___ Wash all of the dishes that have accumulated to this point.

Take a shower. Get yourself ready, except for final clothing change.

1 hour before turkey comes out:

___ Make mashed potatoes.

___ Make Gravy.

___ Make green bean casserole - set aside

___ Make corn casserole - set aside

½ hour before turkey comes out:

___ Change clothes. (an apron comes in handy now)

___ If you are making the mashed sweet potato dish, reheat and top with marshmallows.

___ If you've chosen fresh green beans with almonds instead of the green bean casserole - Steam Green Beans until crisp-tender- about 15 minutes. Watch carefully and do not overcook. Take out of steamer basket and put directly in pot. Melt about 1 table spoon butter and toss to coat well. Toss in almonds. Cover.

The Final Dash

___ Take Turkey out. Set aside for at least 15 minutes before attempting to cut.

___ Put Green bean and corn casseroles in oven

___ Start warming up all of the foods so they will be served hot.

___ Put sweet potatoes in oven to brown marshmallows.

___ Put rolls in the oven. (I like croissants because you don't have to do this!)

Time to start getting it on the table!

Recruit help

- ____ Remove stuffing from turkey. Put in serving dish.
- ____ Have someone carve turkey.
- ____ Have others put warm foods into serving bowls and bring to table.
- ____ Have others take cold items to the table.
- ____ Have someone fill glasses.

Sit Down, Say Thanks. Let's Eat!

You'll have to adjust this schedule according to what you're serving. You might want to copy and paste this checklist into word, make any changes you need according to what you are serving, and print it out. Then you can keep on track. Follow this recipe for a stress free holiday dinner.

Oh, speaking of Recipes – You will find some great tasty easy recipes in the next few pages.

Hey, I want to know: Was this helpful?

I'd like to hear how things turned out. Got any stories you'd like to share? Send them in. Carole@commonsenseliving.com or leave your story [on the blog](#) -

Have a great holiday weekend.

Carole

CommonSenseLiving.com

RebelWithaFork.com

HowtoCleanHouseFast.com

Recipes

Marshmallow Topped Sweet Potatoes

Fresh Cranberry Sauce

Cranberry-Pecan Jello

Corn Casserole

Glazed Carrots

Green Beans with Almonds

Green Beans in Mustard Sauce

Traditional Green Bean Casserole

The Perfect Turkey

Gravy

Cranberry Stuffing

Pumpkin Cream

Pumpkin Bars

Marshmallow Topped Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potatoes

Butter

Milk

Marshmallows

Peel, cube, boil sweet potatoes. When they are very tender, drain. Add butter and milk to make mashed potatoes.

Whip sweet potatoes until creamy.

Put sweet potatoes into a casserole dish that leaves an inch from the sweet potatoes to the top edge.

About 15 minutes before dinner is to be served- reheat sweet potatoes in microwave.

Place Marshmallows on top of the sweet potatoes, covering them entirely. Place in oven until marshmallows are puffy and starting to brown lightly on top. Dish will be extremely hot. Place on hot pad and serve right from casserole dish.

I find that one large sweet potato for every 3 people is about right.

You can put this dish together and set aside until the last 15 minutes before serving dinner. Usually when you would put in the rolls. This dish can be cooked anywhere from 350 – 450 degrees, depending on what else you are cooking. Just watch the marshmallows. When they start to puff out over the top of the dish, you need to take it out.

My grandmother used to put raisins and chopped pecans in this dish. Some people put in pumpkin pie spice. In actuality, most people prefer it plain.

Fresh Cranberry Sauce

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 12-oz. package frozen cranberries, thawed, rinsed, and drained

Bring water and sugar to boil in a medium pan.
Add cranberries and return to boil.
Reduce heat and boil gently for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
Cool completely at room temperature.
Refrigerate until serving.
Makes 2 ¼ cups

Cranberry-Pecan Jello

- 2 pkgs. Raspberry jello
- 1 can crushed pineapple- reserve juice.
- 1 cup finely diced celery
- 1 sm. Pkg. Chopped pecans
- 1 cup finely chopped cranberries
- 1 16 oz. jar cranberry juice cocktail.

Dissolve jello in cranberry juice, stirring for 2 minutes.
Add 1 cup cold water and one cup juice from pineapple.
Mix well.
Place in refrigerator to let thicken slightly.
Add pineapple, celery, pecans, and cranberries.
Let thicken the rest of the way.

This is another passed down family favorite.

Corn Casserole

- 1 can sweet corn, drained
- 1 can cream corn
- 2 eggs beaten
- ½ cup milk
- ½ roll ritz or similar crackers, crushed
- ½ stick butter, melted
- ground black pepper to taste

Mix corns and beaten eggs. Beat in cracker crumbs, mixing well.
Add butter and milk. Mix well.
Put in casserole dish. Bake at 350 until brown on top, about 20 minutes.

Glazed Carrots

Steam baby carrots until tender. Drain. Glaze with just enough butter and brown sugar to coat.

Green Beans with Almonds

This one is so simple. Cook French style green beans according to package directions, or steam fresh green beans for about 15 minutes. Drain completely.

Add butter and slivered almonds.

Green Beans in Mustard Sauce

- 1 1/2 Tablespoons butter
- 3 Tablespoons flour
- 2 teaspoons yellow mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 3 cups cooked green beans

Melt butter in sauce pan.
Blend in flour, seasoning and mustard, mixing until smooth.
Add milk stirring constantly. Cook until thickened.
Add green beans. Heat through and serve.
serves 6

Traditional Green Bean Casserole

- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- 1 10-oz can cream of mushroom soup
- 2 14.5-oz. cans green beans, drained or
- 2 9-oz. packages frozen green beans, thawed.
- 1 1/3 cups canned French fried onions

Mix all ingredients except 2/3 cup of the onions.
Bake 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Stir.
Top with remaining onions and bake 5 minutes longer.

The Perfect Turkey

Cook this one only if you want to be responsible for the turkey forevermore.

Everyone tells you to uncover the turkey during the last half of the cooking. This makes for the dry turkey everyone has grown up with.

I've even come up against a cooked in the bag turkey, at the same dinner. This turkey won hands down.

Preheat oven to 325 F.

Clean turkey inside and out.

Prepare stuffing.

Melt 2 sticks of butter.

Loosely stuff bird. Do not pack. Stuffing expands.

Place Turkey in pan. Turkey lifters are a great things to have.

I always just tuck the legs under that flap of skin.

Place meat thermometer in thickest part of thigh muscle- Not touching a bone.

Brush bird with melted butter coating every part well.

Put in oven uncovered and forget about it for at least ½

hour. Check and baste with juices from pan every half hour until bird is nicely golden brown.

Cover completely with foil. Continue cooking until bird should be about done. Turkey cooks at about 15 to 20 minutes per pound depending on your oven. Mine is more like 20 minutes.

Side Note-

So if you are cooking a 20 lb. bird, at 20 min. per pound - it would take 400 minutes, or 6 hours and 40 minutes. The turkey will be nicely browned at 3 ½ to 4 hours. So from the time you cover the turkey, you will have about 3 hours to do other things.

If you plan to eat at 3, and you are cooking a 20 lb. Bird- It will need to be in the oven by 8 AM.

Check meat thermometer. When done, it should register 185 degrees. Stuffing should register 165 degrees. If not done, baste and put back for another 15 - 20 minutes.

If done, take the bird out of the oven and let it sit for 15 – 20 minutes before trying to carve. Any earlier and you will just shred it.

Gravy

Pour drippings into a measuring cup. Skim off fat (the oily liquid that rises to the top) – reserving ¼ cup. Set the remaining drippings aside.

In a medium saucepan, combine reserved fat and ¼ cup flour. Stir until very smooth.

Add water or broth to reserved drippings to make 2 cups.

Pour into pan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until smooth, thickened, and bubbly. About 2 minutes.

Makes 2 cups – 8 servings.

To double, reserve ½ cup of the fat. Use ½ cup flour. Use chicken broth to bring your liquid up to 4 cups. Prepare as above.

If you want to try something different –

Cranberry Stuffing

1 cup fresh cranberries, chopped

3 Tablespoons sugar

2 cups oven dried raisin bread cubes.

1 teaspoon grated orange peel

¼ teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon

2 tablespoons butter at room temperature

2 tablespoons orange juice

Mix cranberries and sugar. Add bread cubes, orange peel, salt and cinnamon.

Toss lightly with 2 tablespoons soft butter and 2 tablespoons orange juice until well mixed.

Stuff Bird

Pumpkin Cream

Simple, Light, Creamy, Heavenly

8 oz. carton mascarpone cheese

1 cup powdered sugar

15 oz. can prepared pumpkin

½ cup ricotta cheese

1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

½ cup whipping cream

½ cup chopped pecans

In a large bowl, stir together cheeses, pumpkin, powdered sugar, and pumpkin pie spice. Mix until smooth.

In a chilled mixing bowl beat cream with an electric mixer until stiff peaks form.

Fold whipped cream into pumpkin mixture.

Cover and chill.

To serve – spoon into plastic champagne glasses. Sprinkle with chopped pecan pieces. Or you can use it to fill prepared cannoli shells, and sprinkle the ends with chopped pecan pieces.

Serves 12. Can be stretched further if needed – it's very rich. Odds are, you will have some people who don't like pumpkin.

Pumpkin Bars

2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 cup oil
4 eggs beaten
1 2/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1, 16 oz. can pumpkin

Cream eggs, sugar, oil and pumpkin in large bowl.

Sift flour, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and baking soda in another bowl. Slowly add to pumpkin mixture, mixing well.

Pour into greased 15x10 jellyroll pan and bake at 350 for 25 - 30 minutes.

Cool before frosting.

Frosting

1 4oz. pkg cream cheese, softened
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 cup butter, softened
2 cups powdered sugar

Beat together until creamy.

Makes 20

The Next Morning-
No Guilt Pumpkin Muffins

No oil or shortening is used in these healthy and indulgent muffins. This recipe came from an old health club I used to belong to- Charlie Club. They had a restaurant at the club with healthy foods that taste great. These are really yummy muffins. (I do put cinnamon sugar on the tops.)

Dry Ingredients-

2 cups flour
1/4 cup powdered skim milk
1/2 cup brown sugar
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt

Wet Ingredients-

2 egg whites
1 1/4 cups canned pumpkin
3/4 cup water

Combine dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Mix well.

Combine wet ingredients in a separate bowl. Mix well.

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Spray 12 capacity muffin tins with non stick cooking spray.

Combine wet and dry ingredients. Stir only until mixture is moist. Do not over mix.

Scoop 1/4 cup of batter into each compartment of muffin pan.

Bake at 350 for 20 - 30 minutes.

Dance Through Thanksgiving

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