

THE BEST THANKSGIVING DINNER: RECIPES, TIPS & TRIVIA



INDEX

THANKSGIVING RECIPES, COOKING TIPS, AND CRAFTS

MAIN DISH: THANKSGIVING TURKEY RECIPE	3
STUFFING RECIPE FOR THANKSGIVING	4
THANKSGIVING SIDE DISHES	4
THANKSGIVING DESSERT RECIPES	5
TIPS FOR THANKSGIVING	9
THANKSGIVING CRAFTS	14
FUN FACTS ABOUT THANKSGIVING	15

MAKE AHEAD THANKSGIVING RECIPES | SOUP, SIDE, DESSERT

VERMONT BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP	19
MASHED POTATO CASSEROLE	20
PUMPKIN SATIN CHEESECAKE	20

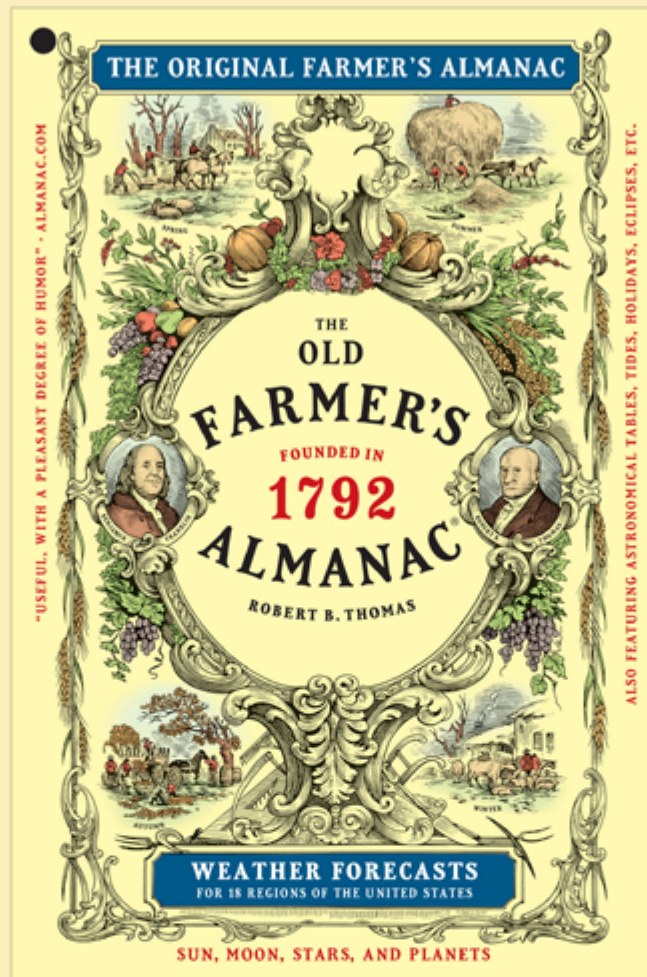
RECIPES FOR YOUR TURKEY LEFTOVERS

COMFORT FOOD TURKEY LEFTOVERS THANKSGIVING LEFTOVERS	21
TURKEY SLOPPY JOES	21
DAY-AFTER TURKEY AND BULGUR	22
DAY-AFTER-TURKEY-DINNER HASH	22
MASHED POTATO SOUP	22
TURKEY-STUFFED EGGPLANT	23
CRANBERRY NUT BREAD	23

THANKSGIVING CLEANING WITH VINEGAR, LEMONS, AND SALT

THANKSGIVING CLEANING	24
---	----

THE ORIGINAL FARMER'S ALMANAC



The Old Farmer's Almanac is North America's #1 Almanac

The biggest, best-selling periodical and also the oldest almanac--since George Washington's time as president. As other almanacs come and go, The Old Farmer's Almanac remains as the esteemed tome valued by generations.

[LEARN MORE](#)

THANKSGIVING RECIPES, COOKING TIPS, AND CRAFTS

Thanksgiving Turkey, Stuffing, Sides, and Dessert Recipes | Thanksgiving Ideas

Few feasts are so steeped in tradition and history, from the cranberry sauce to the turkey to pumpkin pie.

Wishing you a happy Thanksgiving Day!

MAIN DISH: THANKSGIVING TURKEY RECIPE

PILGRIM'S THANKSGIVING TURKEY

This recipe won first prize in The 1988 Old Farmer's Almanac Recipe Contest. The recipe was submitted by Mrs. Jean Roczniak from Rochester, Minnesota.

Yield: Serves 8 to 10

Ingredients

- 1-1/2 cups fresh cranberries
- 4 cups cooked wild rice
- 1/3 cup melted butter or margarine
- 1/3 cup golden corn syrup
- 1 small onion, grated
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon marjoram
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon mace
- 1/8 teaspoon basil
- 8- to 10-pound turkey
- 8 slices smoked bacon

Instructions

Grind the cranberries coarsely or chop. Add the remaining ingredients except turkey and bacon and cook for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Cool. Stuff the turkey with the rice mixture and truss the bird. Place the turkey on a rack in a roasting pan. Cover the breast with bacon slices and roast at 325° F, basting from time to time, for about 3 to 4 hours, or until the thigh meat is fork tender.



STUFFING RECIPE FOR THANKSGIVING

MEMERE'S PORK STUFFING FOR TURKEY

Yield: enough stuffing for up to a 15-pound turkey

Ingredients

- 2 pounds pork butt or blade
- 1 medium onion
- 2-3 large potatoes
- 1/4 to 1/2 package Pepperidge Farm seasoned bread mix
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon ground sage, to taste
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon ground poultry seasoning, to taste

Instructions

In an electric or hand grinder add large chunks of raw cut pork. Dice onion into small pieces and add to ground pork. Cover with water. Add salt and pepper, poultry seasoning and sage. Cook until water is evaporated. Meanwhile, in small saucepan, cook potato chunks until tender. Drain and mash, set aside to cool. When water has almost completely evaporated, add mashed potatoes and seasoned bread. Mix until almost completely dry. (Will become moist upon standing). Taste for flavor. If stuffing is too dry after standing add chicken or turkey broth until moistened.

THANKSGIVING SIDE DISHES

ROASTED GARLIC MASHED POTATOES

Ingredients

- 1 large head of garlic
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- salt & pepper
- Step Two: Mashed potatoes
- 1 pound Yukon gold potatoes, quartered
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 stick of butter
- 3/4 cup heavy cream

Instructions

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Cut head of garlic in half across the top, drizzle with olive oil, season to taste with salt and pepper. Wrap in aluminum foil and roast for about one hour until garlic is tender. Remove garlic by squeezing each clove. Set aside. Put potatoes in saucepan, cover with water, season with salt and pepper and boil 15 to 20 minutes until fork tender. Drain. Add salt, pepper, butter, heavy cream and roasted garlic. Use mixer until desired consistency.

THANKSGIVING SIDE DISHES

CRANBERRY RELISH

Yield: makes 3 to 4 cups

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2/3 cup red-wine vinegar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon each ground allspice, coriander, cloves, and nutmeg
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 cups cranberries, washed and picked over
- 2 pears, peeled, cored, and diced

Instructions

Heat oil and saute the onion, then add vinegar, sugar, spices, and herbs. Simmer until syrupy, about 20 minutes. Add cranberries and pears and simmer another 15 minutes. Serve at room temperature.

THANKSGIVING DESSERT RECIPES

PERFECT APPLE PIE

Who could teach you better than The Old Farmer's Almanac? We call our recipe the Perfect Apple Pie because it has that easy, buttery homemade pie crust you love, and the right mix of apples for that fruity, not gooey, taste.

Note: Be sure to use fresh new apples that are kept cold in the refrigerator. Older apples and/or apples that are stored at room temperature can turn even a firm apple to mush. This is why we added a step of putting your cooked apples in the freezer to keep them firm! We particularly love Granny Smith apples, but you can substitute other apples. Just avoid really soft apples such as McIntosh apples, which would give you a soupy pie.

Total Time: 1 hour 10 minutes / Hands-On Time: 30 minutes - Yield: 8 servings

For the Pie

Ingredients

- 2 pounds firm-sweet apples (such as Golden Delicious, Pink Lady, Jonagold)
- 1 pound firm-tart apples (such as Northern Spy, Granny Smith)
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- Double-Crust Pastry Dough (see below)
- Flour (for work surface)
- 1 large egg, well beaten
- 1 tablespoon coarse or granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch



Perfect Apple Pie
MSPhotographic/Shutterstock

THANKSGIVING DESSERT RECIPES

PERFECT APPLE PIE (CONTINUED)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 425°F. Peel and core apples, slice them ¼ inch thick, and put in a clean bowl.

In a separate bowl, combine apples, lemon juice, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Cook in dutch oven for 10 minutes until apples are tender.

Remove apples from heat and stir in cornstarch. Spread the mixture out onto a baking sheet, and put in the freezer for 10 to 15 minutes until room temperature.

Lightly flour your work surface and roll out the larger disk of Double-Crust Pastry Dough into a 12- to 13-inch circle, rolling out from the center and turning the dough as you go. Transfer to a 10-inch pie plate; press the crust into a plate and let extra dough hang over sides.

Transfer the apples into the pie plate, starting with a 1-inch layer of apples on bottom, then a layer of sprinkled sugar mixture. Repeat until you've used all apples and sugar.

Roll out second piece of pie dough and cover apples with it. Trim excess dough to about 1 inch overhang; tuck edges of top crust under bottom crust and crimp. Brush egg over pie surface; sprinkle with sugar. Make decorative cuts to let steam escape. Bake 20 minutes.

Lower oven temperature to 375°F and bake until golden brown, about 25 minutes longer.

For the Double-Crust Pastry Dough

Ingredients

- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for work surface
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 18 tablespoons (2-1/4 sticks) chilled unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
- 6 to 8 tablespoons ice water

Instructions

In a medium-size bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, and salt until well combined.

Sprinkle butter over flour mixture, and use your fingers to work it in (rub your thumb against your fingertips, smearing the butter as you do). Stop when the mixture looks like cornmeal, with some pea-size bits of butter remaining.

Sprinkle 6 tablespoons ice water on top, and stir with a fork until dough begins to come together. If needed, add more ice water, a tablespoon at a time.

Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and knead three times, or just enough to make a cohesive dough—don't over mix!

Gather into a ball; then divide into two pieces, one slightly larger than the other. Press each piece into a disk and wrap in plastic. Refrigerate 30 minutes.

THANKSGIVING DESSERT RECIPES

BLUE RIBBON PUMPKIN PIE



This recipe won a blue ribbon at the Goshen (Connecticut) Fair—thus the name. The pumpkin pie is nice and firm, not too custardy. It's just a basic pie recipe, but the crust turns out well. Appearance and taste count most at the fair. Yield: serves 6 to 8

For the Filling

Ingredients

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon cloves
- 3 large eggs
- 1-1/2 cups mashed pumpkin, or 1 can (not pre-mixed pie filling)
- 1 cup light cream or evaporated milk
- 9-inch pie shell, unbaked (recipe follows)

Instructions

Mix first 8 ingredients together. Beat in eggs. Stir in pumpkin and cream. Pour into pie shell. Bake in a 400 degrees F oven for 50 minutes, or until knife is clean after inserting in center of pie. Cool completely before serving.

THANKSGIVING DESSERT RECIPES

BLUE RIBBON PUMPKIN PIE (CONTINUED)

For the Flaky Pastry Crust

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cup shortening
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 5 tablespoons cold water
- 1 tablespoon vinegar

Instructions

Pie crust: Mix flour and salt. Cut in shortening and butter until mixture is like coarse crumbs. Add water and vinegar, mixing with fork. Form into ball and chill. Roll out to form 2 crusts. This is foolproof. Makes enough for a double-crust pie.

INDIAN PUDDING

In the U.S., it wasn't until 1863 that President Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving a national holiday, urged by Godey's Lady's Book editor Sarah Josepha Hale, for which we are all thankful.

Make this traditional dessert ahead of time and let it cool while you use the oven for the turkey. Reheat it in the microwave and serve it with vanilla ice cream or whipped cream. Add ½ cup raisins, if you wish.

Yield: serves 8

Ingredients

- 4 cups milk, divided
- 1/2 cup yellow or white cornmeal
- 1/2 cup light-brown sugar
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Instructions

Preheat oven to 250° F. Bring 2 cups of milk just to a boil in a saucepan. Put the cornmeal in the top of a double boiler and pour the scalded milk over it, stirring constantly. Cook for about 15 minutes, stirring frequently, until the cornmeal is smooth. Add the remaining ingredients (except the milk) and stir until smooth. Pour the mixture into a buttered 1-½-quart baking dish, pour the remaining 2 cups of cold milk over the top, and set in a pan of hot water. Bake for 3 hours, or until the pudding is firm.

TIPS FOR THANKSGIVING

HOW TO ROAST A TURKEY

Here are helpful instructions on roasting a turkey, complete with a chart on how long to roast a turkey, based on the classic recipe from the Butterball Turkey folks.

How to Roast a Turkey

- Place a thawed or fresh turkey, breast up, on a flat rack in a shallow pan, 2 to 2-½ inches deep.
- Brush or rub the skin with oil to prevent drying of the skin and to enhance the golden color.
- Place into a preheated 325° F oven.
- When the skin is a light golden color and the turkey is about two-thirds done, shield the breast loosely with a tent of lightweight foil to prevent overcooking of the breast.



How Long to Roast a Turkey

Use the roasting schedule below as a guideline, and start checking for doneness ½ hour before the recommended time ends.

Use an instant-read thermometer to test for doneness. The turkey is cooked when it reaches the following internal temperatures:

- 180° to 185°F deep in the thigh; also, juices should be clear, not pink, when the thigh muscle is pierced deeply.
- 170° to 175°F in the thickest part of the breast, just above the rib bones.
- 160° to 165°F in the center of the stuffing (if the turkey is stuffed).

Let the turkey sit for 15 to 20 minutes before carving to allow the juices to set.

Roast Turkey Cooking Times		
Net Weight (pounds)	Unstuffed (hours)	Stuffed (hours)
10 to 18	3 to 3-½	3-¾ to 4-½
18 to 22	3-½ to 4	4-½ to 5
22 to 24	4 to 4-½	5 to 5-½
24 to 30	4-½ to 5	5-½ to 6-¼

TIPS FOR THANKSGIVING

THE HOLIDAY TABLE: SETTING AND DECORATING

The holidays are full of family, friends and food, and as we gather together, even the table itself becomes an important part of the festivities. While rediscovering old ways and finding new ones to make this holiday special, consider the setting and decoration of your holiday table.

“Dinner parties ought to be fun,” says Roseanna Robinson, director of Home Entertaining and Dining for The Pfaltzgraff Co. “You have to be relaxed and enjoy it, or no one has a good time. Think of how much we do sitting around the table!” Planning ahead can make all the difference, says Robinson. She offers these tips for holiday entertaining:

- Tablecloths are important. Use one. For a simple yet elegant touch, tie the corners with wire-reinforced ribbons, or drape garlands of colored or gold beads around the table.
- Set the table with different holiday plates, no two alike. This makes a festive and colorful table and gets people talking. It’s a great icebreaker.
- Keep centerpieces low. You don’t want your guests to look at each other through a jungle of greenery. If the florist gets carried away, put the arrangement on a buffet or side table.
- A simple centerpiece is the best. For the fall, fill a ceramic bowl filled with orange squashes and harvest vegetables. For Christmas, fill a glass bowl with red ornaments for a stunning display.
- Use a lot of candles. Set out assorted candlesticks of all shapes and sizes. Freezing candles for at least 2 hours helps keep the wax from dripping.
- If you have a holiday collection—such as Santas, reindeer, or snowmen—you could include one at each place. Or, give each person a unique ornament as a little present to take home.
- Plan your menu so it will work easily on one dinner-size plate. Avoid things that will run into everything else. If you’re serving a buffet, don’t include soup. Think through the meal ahead of time and make sure everything will look appealing on one plate.
- Make sure you have a serving dish and serving utensil for everything on your menu. Make these easily accessible before you start cooking.
- Set the table ahead of time, and figure out what will go where. Use sticky notes, if necessary, to plan positions for serving dishes.
- Use place cards and put them at the center of each place setting. Write in bold letters. If you’re entertaining people who don’t know each other, put the name on the front and on the back of the card, so the person sitting across the table can read the name, too.
- Seat couples together. Although party books will tell you to split them up, in today’s busy world, it can be a treat to sit down to a meal with your spouse next to you.
- Don’t go overboard with desserts. Have a light one and, if you must, one drop-dead dessert. That’s plenty. Don’t make dessert the focus of the meal.
- Always have fresh bread or rolls. If you have a good group of people and good bread and dessert, it doesn’t matter what happens with the rest of the meal. Always remember that getting together and sitting around the table rates above the food.



TIPS FOR THANKSGIVING

THE PARTY PLANNER: COOKING FOR A CROWD

How much do you need when you're cooking for a crowd?

If you're planning a big meal, these estimates can help you determine how much food you should buy.

They're based on "average" servings; adjust quantities upward for extra-big eaters and downward if children are included.

FOOD	SERVE 25	SERVE 50	SERVE 100
Meats			
Chicken or turkey breast	12–½ pounds	25 pounds	50 pounds
Fish (fillets or steaks)	7–½ pounds	15 pounds	30 pounds
Hamburgers	8–9 pounds	15–18 pounds	30–36 pounds
Ham or roast beef	10 pounds	20 pounds	40 pounds
Hot dogs	6 pounds	12–½ pounds	25 pounds
Meat loaf	6 pounds	12 pounds	24 pounds
Oysters	1 gallon	2 gallons	4 gallons
Pork	10 pounds	20 pounds	40 pounds
Miscellaneous			
Bread (loaves)	3	5	10
Butter	¾ pound	1–½ pounds	3 pounds
Cheese	¾ pound	1–½ pounds	3 pounds
Coffee	¾ pound	1–½ pounds	3 pounds
Milk	1–½ gallons	3 gallons	6 gallons
Nuts	¾ pound	1–½ pounds	3 pounds
Olives	½ pound	1 pound	2 pounds
Pickles	½ quart	1 quart	2 quarts
Rolls	50	100	200
Soup	5 quarts	2–½ gallons	5 gallons
Side Dishes			
Baked beans	5 quarts	2–½ gallons	5 gallons
Beets	7–½ pounds	15 pounds	30 pounds
Cabbage for cole slaw	5 pounds	10 pounds	20 pounds
Carrots	7–½ pounds	15 pounds	30 pounds
Lettuce for salad (heads)	5	10	20
Peas (fresh)	12 pounds	25 pounds	50 pounds
Potatoes	9 pounds	18 pounds	36 pounds
Potato salad	3 quarts	1–½ gallons	3 gallons
Salad dressing	3 cups	1–½ quarts	3 quarts
Desserts			
Cakes	2	4	8
Ice cream	1 gallon	2 gallons	4 gallons
Pies	4	9	18
Whipping cream	1 pint	2 pints	4 pints

TIPS FOR THANKSGIVING

FREEZER STORAGE CHART: HOW LONG CAN YOU FREEZE FOODS?

How long can you freeze food and know it's still safe to eat? See this freezer storage chart to find out whether or not you can freeze cheese, how long you can freeze fruits, how long chicken lasts in the freezer, and much more.

This is a great chart for people who use the freezer often to store food for a long time. You might be surprised to find that you can freeze most foods much longer than you might imagine.

This chart lists everything from meat to desserts. We've included printable charts at the bottom of this page so you can even tape it to the side of your freezer!

NOTE: These times assume that the freezer temperature is maintained at 0°F (-18°C) or colder. The storage times are for quality only. Frozen foods remain safe almost indefinitely.

Product	Months in Freezer
How Long Can You Freeze Cheese? (except those listed below)	6
Cottage cheese, cream cheese, feta, goat, fresh mozzarella, Neufchâtel, Parmesan, processed cheese (opened)	Not recommended
How Long Can You Freeze Dairy Products?	
Butter	6 to 9
Cream, half-and-half	4
Ice cream	1 to 2
Margarine (not diet)	12
Milk	3
Yogurt	1 to 2
How Long Can You Freeze Fish and Seafood?	
Clams, mussels, oysters, scallops, shrimp	3 to 6
Fatty fish (bluefish, mackerel, perch, salmon)	2 to 3
Lean fish (flounder, haddock, sole)	6
How Long Can You Freeze Fresh Fruit (Prepared for Freezing)?	
All fruit except those listed below	10 to 12
Avocados, bananas	3
Citrus fruit	4 to 6
Juices	8 to 12
How Long Can You Freeze Fresh Vegetables (Prepared for Freezing)?	
Artichokes, eggplant	6 to 8
Asparagus, rutabagas, turnips	8 to 10
Bamboo shoots, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, endive, radishes, salad greens, watercress	Not recommended
Beans, beets, bok choy, broccoli, brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, corn, greens, kohlrabi, leeks, mushrooms, okra, onions, parsnips, peas, peppers, soybeans, spinach, summer squash	10 to 12
Tomatoes (overripe or sliced)	2

TIPS FOR THANKSGIVING

FREEZER STORAGE CHART: HOW LONG CAN YOU FREEZE FOODS? (CONTINUED)

Product	Months in Freezer
How Long Can You Freeze Meat?	
Cooked	2 to 3
Ham, hot dogs, and lunch meats	1 to 2
Sausage, bacon	1 to 2
Uncooked, ground	3 to 4
Uncooked roasts, steaks, or chops	4 to 12
Wild game, uncooked	8 to 12
Poultry	
Cooked	4
Giblets, uncooked	3 to 4
Uncooked	12
Uncooked parts	9
Miscellaneous: How Long Can You Freeze Other Foods?	
Cakes	4 to 6
Casseroles	2 to 3
Cookie dough	2
Cookies	3
Fruit pies, baked	2 to 4
Fruit pies, unbaked	8
Pastry, unbaked	2
Pumpkin or chiffon pies	1
Quick breads	2
Raw egg yolks, whites	12
Soups and stews	2 to 3
Yeast breads	6
Yeast dough	2 weeks

Note: When freezing liquids or foods with liquid, be sure to leave space in the container for expansion.

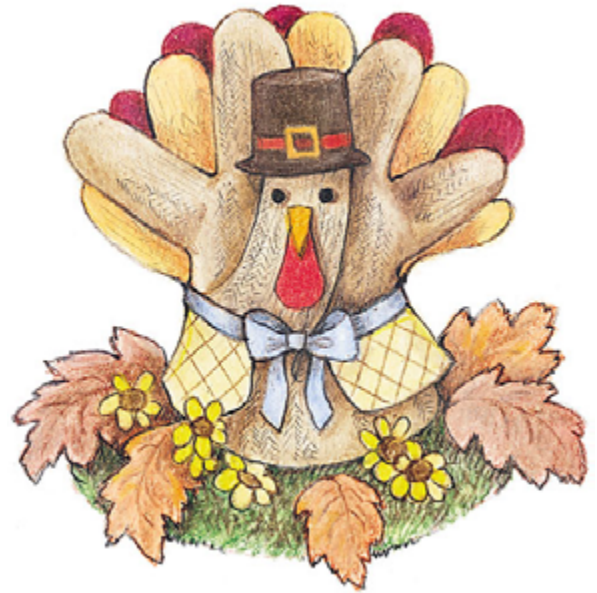
–adapted from Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA

THANKSGIVING CRAFTS

SEASONAL CRAFTS: MAKE A GLOVE TURKEY

Make a glove turkey, a cute decoration for a Thanksgiving table centerpiece. Here's how:

- Use three different-color, small, stretch-knit gloves (yellow; orange or red; and brown). You can find these inexpensive gloves at any department store.
- Stuff the yellow and the orange or red glove with polyester fill.
- Sew the cuff ends shut.
- Stuff the brown glove for the turkey's front with a little more filling so that you get a nice "stomach."
- Stitch the cuff end shut, and tack the thumb to the front to form the turkey's head.
- Glue or sew the other two stuffed gloves to the back of the brown glove.
- Spread the fingers, and make sure that the turkey balances well on a flat surface.



Glove Turkey
Illustration by Margo Letourneau

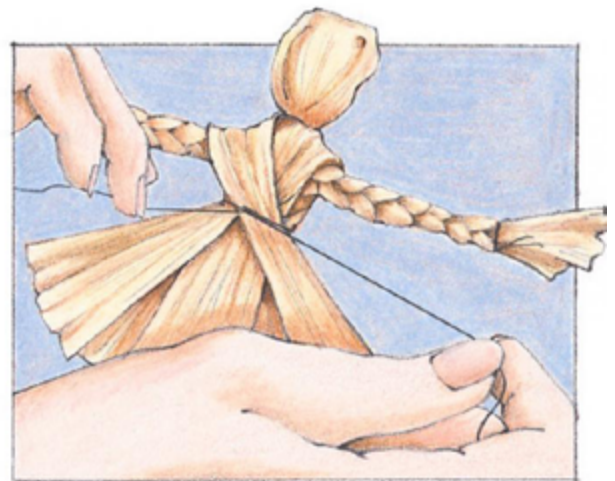
Decorate the turkey with a felt beak, Pilgrim hat, vest, and tie. Attach tiny button eyes. If you like, you can put the turkey on a plate decorated with leaves, moss, and dried flowers for a Thanksgiving centerpiece.

SEASONAL CRAFTS: CORNHUSK DOLL

Native Americans used cornhusks to make spiritual messenger dolls. Early settlers in the Colonies painted faces on cornhusk dolls and made them into toys.

Here's how:

- Save some fine-grained inner cornhusks and store them in a dry place.
- Soak dried husks in warm water to make them easier to handle.
- If you want, dye them with regular fabric dyes (they pick up the color, but slowly).
- For the head, make a ball out of a cornhusk, fold two husks over the ball, and tie off for the neck with cotton string or heavy thread.
- Make arms by rolling husks into a tight tube or braiding three husks together, then put the piece through the middle of the doll.
- Make a dress by folding husks over each shoulder and crossing them at waist level.
- Tie the waist with string and cover with a narrow cornhusk.
- Trim the skirt so she can stand up.
- Glue on corn silk for hair, and make a bonnet out of a husk.



THANKSGIVING CRAFTS

SEASONAL CRAFTS: HOW TO MAKE A NUT WREATH

Decorate for the holidays this season with this festive homemade nut wreath!

A wide variety of nuts is sold at holiday time. Fashion them into this charming decoration especially suitable for Thanksgiving.

Materials Needed

- 1 straw or grapevine wreath form (10 to 12 inches)
- an assortment of unshelled walnuts, chestnuts, filberts (hazelnuts), almonds, and brazil nuts
- acrylic varnish
- brush
- wire
- glue gun
- pine sprigs, ivy, or small grape leaves (optional)
- ribbon

Directions

- To give the wreath a special sheen, paint the filberts and chestnuts with varnish and set them on a wire rack to dry.
- Attach a loop of wire to the back of the wreath form for hanging it when complete.
- Glue on the nuts, working slowly around the wreath, making sure they are all secured. Start with the largest nuts—walnuts, chestnuts, and Brazil nuts, and use the smaller filberts and almonds to fill in around them.
- Using a glue gun, attach the greens or leaves to the wreath form in between the nuts.
- Tie the ribbon into a bow and secure it to the wreath with glue or wire.



FUN FACTS ABOUT THANKSGIVING

TURKEY TRIVIA

Here is some fun trivia about turkeys, the all-American bird.

- There are several theories about how turkeys got their name. One story claims that Christopher Columbus heard some birds say “tuka, tuka”, and his interpreter came up with the name tukki, which means “big bird” in Hebrew.
- Ben Franklin thought the turkey would be a better national symbol than the bald eagle. According to the Franklin Institute, he wrote in a letter to his daughter: “For my own part, I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad moral character; he does not get his living honestly...like those among men who live by sharpening and robbing...he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward; the little king-bird, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district...For in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours...”
- The average person in the United States will eat 15 pounds of turkey this year.
- The loose red skin attached to the underside of a turkey’s beak is called a wattle. When the male turkey is excited, especially during mating season, the wattle turns scarlet. The fleshy flap of skin that hangs over the gobbler’s beak is called a snood and also turns bright red when the bird is excited.

FUN FACTS ABOUT THANKSGIVING

TURKEY TRIVIA (CONTINUED)

- The wild turkey is one of the more difficult birds to hunt. It won't be flushed out of the brush with a dog. Instead, hunters must try to attract it with different calls. Even with two seasons a year, only one in six hunters will get a wild turkey.
- By the 1930s, almost all of the wild turkeys in the U.S. had been hunted. Today, thanks to conservation programs, there are plenty of wild turkeys—they even invade cities!
- A male turkey is called a tom, a female is a hen, and a youngster is a poult.
- The domestic tom can weigh up to 50 pounds, the domestic hen up to 16 pounds. The wild tom can weigh up to 20 pounds, the wild hen up to 12 pounds.
- The wild turkey can fly! (It does, however, prefer to walk or run.) The domestic turkey is not an agile flyer, though the bird will perch in trees to stay safe from predators.
- The average life span of a domestic turkey, from birth to freezer, is 26 weeks. During this period of time, it will eat about 75 pounds of turkey feed. The average life span of a wild turkey is three or four years. It generally feeds on seeds, nuts, insects, and berries.
- The wobbly little thing on the turkey's chest is the turkey's beard and is made up of keratin bristles. Keratin is the same substance that forms hair and horns on other animals.
- Only male turkeys, or toms, can gobble, and they mostly do it in the spring and fall. It is a mating call and attracts the hens. Wild turkeys gobble at loud sounds and when they settle in for the night.

HISTORIC THANKSGIVING STORMS

Some of our wildest weather has occurred around Thanksgiving! Here are 5 of the biggest Thanksgiving storms in history.

November 24–25, 1950: The Great Appalachian Storm

A storm rapidly deepened as it tracked inland along the eastern slopes of the Appalachians. A wind gust of 83 mph was recorded at Albany, N.Y., the strongest ever, with sustained winds of 50 to 60 mph. Many trees and power lines were blown down across the region, and wind damage was extensive in New York State.

November 24–25, 1971: Thanksgiving Snowstorm

Heavy snow began on the day before Thanksgiving and continued into Thanksgiving Day. Albany, N.Y., picked up 22.5 inches, the greatest November snowfall on record, with amounts up to 30 inches reported elsewhere. This storm turned the busiest travel day of the year into a nightmare, with many stranded travelers not making it to their destinations.

November 25, 1983: The Great Thanksgiving Weekend Blizzard

This storm hit Denver, Colo., and produced 21.5 inches of snow in 37 hours, closing Stapleton Airport for 24 hours. The snow and wind closed interstate highways around Denver.

November 26, 1987: Thanksgiving Day Storm

A storm produced heavy snow in northern New England and upstate New York. Snowfall totals in Maine ranged up to 20 inches at Flagstaff Lake. Totals in New Hampshire reached as high as 18 inches, at Errol. Gales lashed the coast of Maine and New Hampshire. A second storm, over the southern and central Rockies, produced nine inches of snow at Kanosh, Utah, and 13 inches at Divide, Colo., with five inches reported at Denver.

November 23, 1989: Thanksgiving Day Storm

Low pressure tracking across the Carolinas brought heavy rain to parts of the southern Atlantic coast region, and blanketed the middle Atlantic coast states and southern New England with heavy snow. The storm produced up to nine inches of snow over Long Island, N.Y., and up to 14 inches over Cape Cod, Mass., at Yarmouth. Totals of 4.7 inches at New York City and 6 inches at Newark, N.J., were records for Thanksgiving Day.

FUN FACTS ABOUT THANKSGIVING

SARAH JOSEPHA HALE: FOUNDER OF THANKSGIVING

Happy Thanksgiving! While you are being grateful for your food, friends, and family, take a little time to remember Sarah Josepha Hale, who made this day of thanks possible.

Who Was Sarah Josepha Hale?

Sarah Josepha Buell was born on October 24, 1788, on a farm in Newport, New Hampshire. From a tender age, she was curious, smart, and eager to learn.

As a young girl, Buell was taught by her mother about history and literature. Later, her brother Horatio taught her everything that he was learning as a student at Dartmouth College.

When Buell was growing up, women were not accepted as teachers. However, this didn't stop her from founding a private school when she was 18 years old. She taught until she met David Hale. They married in 1813.



David encouraged Sarah to write short stories and articles. Many of these were published in local newspapers.

Suddenly, in 1822, David died, and Hale was left to care for their five children. To make ends meet, she first operated a women's hat shop and later resumed teaching and writing. Soon she published her first book of poems, including one that became the famous nursery rhyme "Mary Had a Little Lamb." In 1827, she published her first novel.

John Blake of Boston read Hale's novel and asked her to work for him on Ladies' Magazine. She accepted and became the first woman editor of a magazine in the United States. Hale introduced new ideas and a new title, calling it American Ladies' Magazine.

Within a few years, Louis Godey of Philadelphia had bought Blake's magazine and merged it with Godey's Lady's Book, keeping Hale as editor.

How Did Sarah Josepha Hale Start Thanksgiving?

Throughout this period, Hale had written hundreds of letters to governors, ministers, newspaper editors, and every U.S. president with one request: that the last Thursday in November be set aside to "offer to God our tribute of joy and gratitude for the blessings of the year."

Native American harvest festivals and colonists' services to give thanks had taken place for centuries in North America, but there had never been a Thanksgiving holiday.

In 1863, with the country torn by the Civil War, Hale's campaign finally got people's attention. That September, she put her thanksgiving message into an editorial and wrote to President Abraham Lincoln, urging him to make Thanksgiving Day a fixed national festival.

Lincoln liked Hale's idea. On October 3, 1863, he issued a proclamation declaring the last Thursday of November to be National Thanksgiving Day. He ordered all government offices in Washington closed on that day.

Hale enjoyed many Thanksgiving celebrations. She died on April 30, 1879, at the age of 90.

FUN FACTS ABOUT THANKSGIVING

WHY DO WE EAT TURKEY AT THANKSGIVING?

Why do we eat turkey (well, most of us) on Thanksgiving? The Old Farmer's Almanac for Kids Volume 3 offers a few pieces of history that may answer that question!

The All-American Bird: Thanksgiving Turkey

Nobody is sure if the pilgrims ate turkey at their first Thanksgiving feast in 1621. One account doesn't mention turkey; another does, but it was written 20 years later. It wasn't until after 1863, the year when President Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving Day a national holiday, that turkeys began to land on dinner plates across the country.

Every November since 1947, a "National Thanksgiving Turkey" has been presented to the U.S. President. Harry Truman got the first one. During an official ceremony in the Rose Garden, the president "pardons" the turkey, meaning its life is spared and it does not get eaten.

White Meat vs. Dark Meat

A turkey's breast muscles are for flying, but they are seldom used. There are few blood vessels there, and little oxygen is delivered to them—which is why breast meat is white.

Turkeys run around a lot, so their leg and thigh muscles have many oxygen-carrying blood vessels—which is why leg and thigh meat is dark.

Turkey Nuggets

There are several theories about how turkeys got their name. One story claims that Christopher Columbus heard some birds say, "tuka, tuka," and his interpreter came up with the name tukki, which means "big bird" in Hebrew.

Folklore: Turkeys perched on trees and refusing to descend indicates snow.

THANKSGIVING WEATHER FOLKLORE

- If the geese on St. Martin's Day (November 11) stand on ice, they will walk in mud at Christmas.
- If the first snow sticks to the trees, it foretells a bountiful harvest.
- If sheep feed facing downhill, watch for a snowstorm.
- If on All Saints Day the beech acorn is dry, we will stick behind the stove in winter, but if it is wet and not light the winter will not be dry, but wet.
- Thunder in November indicates a fertile year to come.
- If there be ice in November that will bear a duck, there will be nothing thereafter but sleet and muck.
- As November 21st, so the winter.
- When the winter is early, it will not be late.

MAKE AHEAD THANKSGIVING RECIPES

Make Ahead Thanksgiving Recipes | Soup, Side, Dessert

Here is a list of some great make ahead Thanksgiving recipes, including appetizers, soups, side dishes, and desserts, to make your Thanksgiving day a bit easier.

Our make ahead Thanksgiving recipes will help ease the burden of cooking on this busy holiday. All of these Thanksgiving recipes can be prepared ahead of the feast day, so that your main concern on the day itself is simply the “ruling roast” or the “big bird.”

VERMONT BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

Maple syrup brings out the butternut flavor. This recipe comes from *The Old Farmer's Almanac Cooking Fresh* magazine.

Yield: makes 12 servings

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and chopped
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 4 cups warm chicken stock
- 2 pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into large cubes
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley
- 1-1/2 cups milk
- 1/2 cup light cream
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup, or to taste
- chopped fresh parsley, for garnish
- freshly ground black pepper, for garnish

Instructions

In a large stockpot, melt the butter over medium-low heat. Add the onion and carrot and cook for about 5 minutes, or until the onion is tender. Sprinkle the vegetables with the flour and, stirring constantly, continue cooking for 3 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat and add the chicken stock. Add the squash, garlic, and parsley, and simmer, covered, for 45 minutes. Set aside to cool for 10 minutes. In a blender or food processor, purée the mixture until smooth, in batches. Return the soup to the pot, add the milk, cream, and syrup, stir to incorporate, and heat through. Garnish with parsley and black pepper.

Make Ahead: This soup can be prepared up to the purée stage, covered, and refrigerated for 4 days or frozen in an airtight container for 1 month. **To use:** For each serving, combine ½ cup of the thawed purée, 2 tablespoons of milk, 2 teaspoons of cream, and 1 teaspoon of maple syrup, then heat through.



Vermont Butternut Squash Soup
Becky Luigart-Stayner

MAKE AHEAD THANKSGIVING RECIPES

MASHED POTATO CASSEROLE

A very tasty dish that you can do ahead of time and pop into the oven at the last minute. Good for a buffet.

Yield: serves 8 to 10

Ingredients

- 10 medium-size potatoes, peeled
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup cottage cheese
- 1 tablespoon grated onion
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Instructions

Boil the potatoes in salted water to cover until tender. Mash or rice. While still hot, add the sour cream, cottage cheese, onion, butter or margarine, pepper and salt. Mix well. Place in a casserole. Sprinkle Parmesan on top. Bake in a 325 degree oven for 30 minutes.

PUMPKIN SATIN CHEESECAKE

These can be made up to 2 weeks ahead and frozen until serving. Yield: 2 pies (16 servings total)

Ingredients

- 1 8-ounce package fat-free cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 cup skim milk
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 8-ounce container frozen Cool Whip at refrigerator temperature
- 2 6-ounce prepared graham cracker piecrusts (or, if preferred, 2 homemade cracker crusts)
- 1 15-ounce can pumpkin puree
- 2 3.4 ounce packages vanilla instant pudding mix
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- Garnish: whipped topping, graham cracker crumbs

Instructions

Remove plastic lids from pie crusts and set aside. In a medium bowl, mix cream cheese, 2 tablespoons skim milk, and sugar with an electric mixer until creamy. Whisk in Cool Whip Free. Divide the cream cheese/whipped topping mixture between the 2 piecrusts. In another medium bowl, combine pumpkin, 1 cup milk, pudding mix, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves. Layer each pie with half the pumpkin mixture. Cover with inverted piecrust lids and refrigerate at least 4 hours, or freeze. If you freeze pies, thaw the whole pie in the refrigerator for an hour before serving.



MAKE AHEAD THANKSGIVING RECIPES

PUMPKIN SATIN CHEESECAKE (CONTINUED)

*Note from the Food Editor: We had three people test this recipe in three different kitchens, and it turned out well each time. But we have heard from some readers who have had difficulty with this recipe. Based on what we've learned from these readers, we do have a few words of advice: Do not overmix the bottom layer of the pie. Mix just enough to blend. Also, you might try refrigerating or freezing the pie for 30 minutes after you add the first layer, but before you add the second. Lastly, do not make the top layer until you are ready to spread it, because the pudding mix will thicken as it sits.

*We have also heard from a few readers who tried making this pie with sugar-free pudding mix. We don't recommend that you try this, as that mix contains all sorts of different fillers, which will result in a very different consistency. Also, if you find that the topping is too thick, even with the full cup of milk, feel free to add a little more until it reaches a better consistency.

COMFORT FOOD: RECIPES FOR YOUR TURKEY LEFTOVERS

Comfort Food | Turkey Leftovers

Thanksgiving is a day spent full of cheer alongside family, friends, and typically an abundance of food! You slave over the stove for hours spending time making these meals, so why let the food go to waste once the holiday is over? Here are a few recipe ideas from The Old Farmer's Almanac Comfort Food cookbook that will help you to utilize that leftover turkey and make a delicious meal!

TURKEY SLOPPY JOES

Nobody will ever ask "Where's the beef?" with this dish! The secret to what makes this dish so delectable is its sauce—a mixture of tomatoes, ketchup, barbecue sauce, brown sugar, mustard, and one other extra special ingredient to spice it up! A must-try after Thanksgiving. Yield: Makes 4 to 5 servings.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 ¼ pounds ground turkey
- 1 medium green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup diced tomatoes with their juice
- ½ cup ketchup or ¼ cup ketchup plus ¼ cup tomato-based chili sauce
- ¼ cup barbecue sauce
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon prepared mustard
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- Worcestershire sauce, to taste
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste



COMFORT FOOD | TURKEY LEFTOVERS

TURKEY SLOPPY JOES (CONTINUED)

Instructions

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the turkey, breaking it up with a wooden spoon. Add the green pepper, onion, and garlic and cook for 5 minutes, or until the meat is browned. Add the tomatoes, ketchup, barbecue sauce, brown sugar, mustard, chili powder, salt, and 1 cup of water. Bring to a simmer, stirring often. Simmer for 12 to 18 minutes, or until the mixture is thick but still saucy. Near the end of the cooking, add the vinegar plus Worcestershire sauce and black pepper, to taste, and stir to combine. Serve over grilled or toasted rolls or burger buns.

DAY-AFTER TURKEY AND BULGUR

This is a good antidote to rich holiday fare. If you're in a hurry, forgo salting the eggplant, a step that sweetens it somewhat by removing its bitter juice. Serve with leftover cranberry sauce or a fruit salad. Yield: serves 6 to 8

Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant, peeled and sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 2 cups cubed leftover turkey
- 2 cups chicken or turkey stock
- 1 cup bulgur

Instructions

Arrange the eggplant slices in a colander and salt liberally. Allow to sit for 30 minutes. Rinse and chop. Heat the olive oil in a Dutch oven and saute the eggplant, onion, and red and green peppers over low heat until soft, about 10 minutes. Add the turkey and stock and heat just to a boil. Stir in the bulgur. Cover, and simmer 5 minutes. Keeping the cover in place, remove from heat. Let sit for 15 minutes before serving.

DAY-AFTER-TURKEY-DINNER HASH

Use an 11- to 12-inch skillet to recycle the leftovers from your Thanksgiving feast. Yield: 4 to 5 servings

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 cups leftover stuffing
- 2 cups leftover mashed potatoes
- 2 cups chopped, leftover turkey
- 1 cup leftover gravy

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Melt the butter in a large cast-iron skillet and stir in the onion. Saute over medium heat for 7 minutes; then crumble up the stuffing and add it. Spoon the mashed potatoes here and there in the skillet and scatter in the turkey. Warm the gravy and thin it with a little water. Pour into the skillet, tossing lightly with a fork. Mash the hash down gently with a fork and bake 20 minutes.

MASHED POTATO SOUP

A fine way to make use of a small dab of leftovers. Yield: Serves 4

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 cups cream
- 1 cup mashed potatoes
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Chopped parsley

Instructions

Melt butter in saucepan and saute carrots, celery, and onion until tender. Add cream and heat almost to a boil. (Do not boil.) Add potatoes and stir until blended. Season with salt and pepper. Garnish with chopped parsley.

TURKEY-STUFFED EGGPLANT

Ingredients

- 2 medium eggplants
- 6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) butter
- 1 pound mushrooms, diced
- 2 onions, diced
- 2 cups leftover diced cooked turkey
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup shredded grated cheese
- chopped fresh oregano, for garnish

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Grease a baking sheet.

Cut eggplants in half lengthwise and carefully scoop out pulp.

Dice pulp and set aside.

In a skillet over medium heat, melt the butter. Add diced eggplant pulp, mushrooms, and onions and sauté for 15 minutes, or until the vegetables are soft. Add turkey and stir to blend. Add wine and season with salt and pepper.

Spoon mixture into eggplant shells, mounding it above the shell rims, if necessary. Place shells on prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle with cheese and bake for 15 minutes. Garnish with oregano.

Note: The stuffing used to fill eggplant could also be used to fill tomatoes or peppers.



Turkey-Stuffed Eggplant
Becky Luigart-Stayner

CRANBERRY NUT BREAD

“A slightly cinnamony cranberry bread made even more special by a tart and creamy topping.”

–The Four Chimneys Inn, Nantucket, Massachusetts

Yield: Makes 1 loaf

Ingredients

- 2 cups sifted flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 egg
- 1 cup whole cranberry sauce
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup cranberry sauce
- 3 ounces cream cheese
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind

Instructions

Sift onto waxed paper all the dry ingredients. Add the walnuts. In mixing bowl beat egg and add 1 cup cranberry sauce and oil. Add the dry ingredients. Stir till blended. Pour into greased loaf pan and bake at 350 degrees F for 55 minutes. Cool. Blend 1/2 cup cranberry sauce with cream cheese; mix in grated lemon rind. Spoon over each slice when ready to serve.

THANKSGIVING CLEANING WITH VINEGAR, LEMONS, & SALT

Using Vinegar, Lemon, and Salt Homemade Cleaners

It's time to clean the house for Thanksgiving, so find out how to use the natural ingredients of vinegar, lemons, and salt in homemade cleaners to clean your home naturally!

HOW TO CLEAN THE KITCHEN WITH VINEGAR, LEMONS, AND SALT

How to Clean the Stove:

- Filmy dirt and grease on the stovetop will come clean with white vinegar.
- Oven spills will stop smoking if you sprinkle them with salt. Wipe with a damp cloth after the oven cools.

How to Clean Silverware:

- To remove stains, place silverware in a pan and cover with sour milk. Let stand overnight. In the morning, rinse with cold water, then hot water.

How to Clean Dishes & Glassware:

- To remove cloudy mineral deposits from drinking glasses, put a tablespoon of lemon juice in each glass and fill with hot water. Let stand for several hours, then wash.
- Use lemon juice and salt to return the luster to china.



How to Clean Countertops:

- Laminated counters and tabletops can be cleaned by rubbing with a soft cloth soaked in white vinegar. This also makes them shine. To remove stains without scratching, make a paste of baking soda and water. Apply it to the stain, let sit for a minute or two, and rub to remove.

HOW TO CLEAN THE BATHROOM WITH HOMEMADE CLEANERS

How to Clean Tubs, Bowls, and Sinks:

- To remove bathtub and sink film, wipe with white vinegar, then baking soda. Rinse with water.
- Clean and deodorize the toilet bowl by pouring white vinegar into it. Let stand for five minutes, then flush. Spray stubborn stains with vinegar, then scrub vigorously.

HOW TO CLEAN FLOORS AND FURNISHINGS NATURALLY

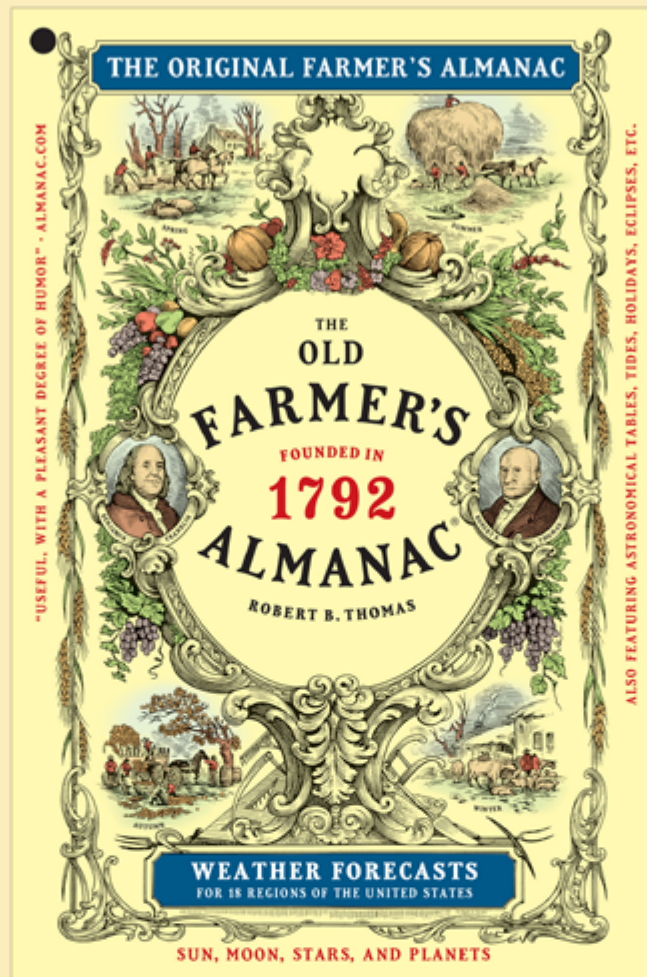
How to Clean Floors:

- Animal urine stains and odors can usually be vanquished by using a mixture of equal parts white vinegar and water. Sponge it into the carpet and then blot it up with thick towels.
- To clean up coffee spills, blot up excess coffee, then rub the stain with a solution of water, mild powdered detergent, and white vinegar.
- Wash a wood or tile floor with an orange cut in half. Put one half in each hand, get down on your knees, and work in circles to remove grease and dirt. Rinse with a damp rag.

How to Clean Furnishings:

- Clean discolored or dirty wood with a mixture of equal parts turpentine, white vinegar, and mineral oil. Shake well before and during use. Apply with a soft cloth and rub vigorously.
- To remove scratches, combine equal parts lemon juice and salad oil. Apply with a soft cloth and rub until scratches disappear.

THE ORIGINAL FARMER'S ALMANAC



The Old Farmer's Almanac is North America's #1 Almanac

The biggest, best-selling periodical and also the oldest almanac--since George Washington's time as president. As other almanacs come and go, The Old Farmer's Almanac remains as the esteemed tome valued by generations.

[LEARN MORE](#)