

FOR THE LOVE OF FOOD



RICK HALBERG

Memories linger with seasonal aromas

This is one of those times a year when there are so many smells I associate with specific holidays and activities. We're getting into the time when there are great family feasts - Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas.

What could be better than the smells of roasting meats, sweet potatoes and cranberries? For most holidays that require it, I am given the task of roasting the turkey.

Even though I am a chef, my mother-in-law insists that I not do any work, except for making the turkey. She has always felt that the turkey comes out best when it is roasted in my restaurant ovens. The truth is I almost always roast the turkey at home, and it comes out the same. The best part of this is the delicious smell that fills our house as the turkey cooks.

Hanukkah

During Hanukkah my family always goes to a potato latke party at a relative's house. Walking in is a treat. There is something special about the earthy, heavy smell of fried potato pancakes mixed with the sweet smells of sour cream and applesauce. Every year there is always a debate about how people eat their latkes.

Some eat them with salt, some with sugar, some dip them in sour cream. It's always the same debate, and always funny. That's one of the great things about family meals, sitting around a big table with people you love and sharing the same wonderful memories.

Another one of my favorite aromas is hot chocolate or hot spiced cider after coming in from an afternoon of ice skating when your fingers are almost too numb to hold the mug.

Manhattan memories

I just returned from a whirlwind trip to Manhattan and had forgotten about the mix of food smells in that great city. There's something different on every street corner, and the smells seem to mingle together, yet you can separate them out - kosher hot dogs, Polish sausage, Indonesian grilled meats, shish kebabs, Chinese and Japanese noodle shops. There's so much variety, and because it's so hard to stay in one place in New York City, it's easy, and exciting to eat on the run.

The main purpose of my trip to New York was to visit the James Beard House. James Beard is recognized as the father of American gastronomy. After his death in 1985, Julia Child had the idea to preserve his home. It was always a gathering place for top culinarians, and Child thought it should remain that way.

Today, the James Beard Foundation celebrates this country's culinary artists, provides scholarship and educational opportunities, serves as a resource for the industry, and offers members the opportunity to enjoy dinners there, which are prepared by top chefs from around the world.

Craig Common of the Common Grill in Chelsea was preparing a dinner there during my visit, so I offered to give him a hand. It was quite an experience, and Craig's dinner was great.

I have been invited to prepare a dinner at the James Beard House next year and am looking forward to it. Once I have the date I'll be sure to let you know. I'm going to attempt to put together a group travel package for those who might like to attend the dinner and be my hometown rooting section.

Please see FOOD, B2

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Readers share recipes
- Holiday ten



Parade leads our Thanksgiving traditions

Sweet: The "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" float makes its way down Woodward in America's Thanksgiving Parade; 9:15 a.m. to noon Thanksgiving morning, Thursday, Nov. 27. The parade begins on Woodward at Mack and proceeds to Jefferson Ave.



BLAKE SPACER

BY KEELY WYGNOK

STAFF WRITER

At the feasting begin! Thanksgiving Day officially ushers in the start of the holiday season.

In our family the celebration began early in the morning when my brothers and I woke my dad up at the crack of dawn and asked - "is it time to go to the parade yet?"

I don't know how he managed to look after me, and my younger brothers, Mike and Greg, carry a ladder for us to sit on, blankets, and a thermos full of hot chocolate.

Dad found our spot on Woodward Avenue, in front of the marquee of an all night theater, by accident. It happened the one and only time my mom joined us.

"We were running late, and traffic was getting heavy," he recalled. "Instead of trying to head all the way downtown near Hudson's, I pulled off along the route, and looked for a space to park."

We walked a couple of blocks to Woodward and found "our spot." There was even a White Castle down the street, a good thing in case one of us "had to go," and the theater marquee offered shelter from unexpected sprinkles and flurries. For a father with three small children it was heaven.

While we were at the parade, mom was home getting dinner ready, usually with the help of my grandma. I remember one Thanksgiving when we had to wait for the turkey to be done.

Every year has a favorite Thanksgiving Day memory, and if you live in metro Detroit, chances are very good the parade is one of them.

"My parents were from South America, and we moved here in 1961," said Annabel Cohen of Bloomfield Hills. "We lived downtown, and I remember being three or four and sitting on my dad's shoulders watching the parade. For some

reason it seems a lot colder now. The parade initiated them into the Thanksgiving tradition."

Cohen, a chef, writer, and cooking instructor, with Linda Hayman, a parade foundation trustee, compiled "Traditions: America's Thanksgiving Parade Cookbook," a collection of favorite recipes from Detroit's personalities. It ties in with this year's parade theme - "America's Thanksgiving Parade... Everyone's Favorite Family Tradition."

All of the proceeds from the sale of the book benefit the Michigan Thanksgiving Parade Foundation, which produces the parade.

"Everything for the cookbook was donated - we don't have to pay anybody back," said Hayman who shared her Cranberry Quick Bread recipe.

"The parade is a huge volunteer effort," said Cohen who also contributed some of her favorite recipes including Root Vegetable and Apple Purée and Apple Cider Glazed Roast Turkey. Parade supporters were invited to share their favorite recipes for the book, not all of them are for Thanksgiving dinner.

There are recipes for appetizers, soups and salads, vegetables and side dishes, entrees, desserts, and even "Carmen's Classic French Toast," contributed by Carmen Harlan.

"It's interesting to see the traditions, and how different ethnic groups relate to Thanksgiving," said Cohen. "We even have two stuffed cabbage recipes in the book. People celebrate the whole weekend. Paul W. Smith doesn't cook on Thanksgiving, he eats out, and shared a recipe from the 'Beruit Restaurant' in Toledo."

Vintage parade photos, comments from recipe contributors, cook's tips, and sayings to share are part of this culinary treasure.

Please see QUALITY, B2

Thanksgiving Tidbits

- After the colonists' first bountiful harvest, Pilgrim Governor William Bradford declared a day of Thanksgiving. Indian Chief Massasoit attended along with 90 braves.
- The first Thanksgiving feast lasted three days.
- Indian braves presented the Pilgrims with a gift of five deer for the first Thanksgiving dinner.
- Venison, roasted or stewed partridges, ducks, geese and turkeys, common game along the Cape Cod shore, were probably served at the first Thanksgiving dinner. Cranberries were boiled to make a sauce for the meat - perhaps sweetened with a little wild honey.
- Pumpkins and corn were abundant in the New World, but since there was no flour or molasses, there was no Thanksgiving pumpkin pie - just plain, boiled pumpkin.
- Desserts for the first Thanksgiving dinner consisted of wild fruits and nuts.
- The "splits" served at the first Thanksgiving was a very sweet, strong wine made from wild grapes.

Information from Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village archives.



JOSEPH CALABRO

"Moo-ve" over: "The Cow Jumped Over the Moon" is one of the balloons you'll see in America's Thanksgiving Parade.

Go Portside for your Thanksgiving feast

FOCUS ON WINE



RAY & ELEANOR NEALD

Port wines are seeing a new age and rising popularity in the U.S. Thanksgiving is a perfect time to serve them - before and after the traditional feast.

Thanksgiving relives our history. If you take our suggestion and serve port, or more properly Porto, here's a bit of history to relate. Port was first created, almost by accident, in the 17th century. British traders, cut off from France by wars, took fancy to the red wines of the Douro Valley, near Oporto in Northern Portugal. To preserve the wine for their long journey back to England, they added brandy to it. The combina-



Fabulous finish: Fine port makes a perfect ending to a Thanksgiving Day meal.

tion created an extraordinary flavor. No one we know relates port tales and explanations of the many port wine styles like Adrian Bridge, director of the port house Taylor Fladgate &

Yeatman and its sister company Fonseca Guimaraens. Taylor (as it's commonly known) is one of the oldest and most prestigious of port wine companies, dating its founding to 1692. In 1744, the son of the company's founder became the first British wine shipper to purchase property in Portugal's Upper Douro Valley, the most famous port wine growing region.

This purchase became the cornerstone of a series of Taylor vineyard acquisitions including the most famous Quinta de Vargellas. Quinta is Portuguese for vineyard. Additionally, through the years, Taylor has become a recognized leader in wood-aged and vintage port production. It also pioneered Chip Dry white port and Late Bottled Vintage port styles.

"The port wine region is the only one in the world that uses dynamite to

plant grapes," Bridge noted. "The soil is so rocky that it takes one ton of dynamite to plant two and one-half acres of vineyard." Might we say a big bang for the buck!

Chip Dry white port was a Richard Yeatman invention in 1934. He was the first to depart from the traditional sweeter white port if port consumed in Portugal, but rarely exported.

Lew Wiedemann, Maitre d' of Big Rock Chop and Brow House's specialty bar Got Rocks, says Chip Dry should be served slightly chilled neat or on the rocks. He also suggests it 50/50 with tonic and a lemon twist as a "longer" aperitif. As such, it makes a good Thanksgiving Day pre-meal opener.

After the feast, there are a number of port styles from which to choose. An older (20+ years) vintage port would be

Please see MIRACLE, B2