

CHEERS FOR BEER



CHEF JOSEPH STYKE

Feast on Belgian fare hearty ale

It's Thanksgiving - I've gotta buy the turkey, at least a 24-25 pounder. Aunt Mary likes moist stuffing, and grandpa likes it dry as Death Valley, and then there's Cousin Phil with his, "what, no oysters?" Why did I say I would cook the family meal this year? Somebody get me a gun.

Don't get me wrong, I love turkey. I do one on my grill once a month from May to September, but after all those leftovers - turkey soup, turkey salad, turkey hash, turkey croquettes, and let's not forget turkey surprise - I'm done with it for awhile. Sound familiar?

Here's a story, and a suggestion for something different after Thanksgiving when you cry out for red meat.

Friendly gathering

About 11 years ago a small group of us got together the week after Thanksgiving for food, drink and to share funny horror stories about working on the holiday. The first year was at Marcel's house. Since Marcel is Belgian, Belgian food and ale it was. The feast was a hit, and we decided to have the same meal for the next four years. Everyone put his own twist on it.

Steamed mussels and Beef Carbonade in Belgium are like coney dogs here - you can get them everywhere. Mussels are in season right now, and very tasty. I cooked and served them with a Gueuze Lambic Ale, either Boon or Cantillon.

Lambic is one of the most bizarre beers made. The malt bill is made up of raw wheat and malted barley. The hops are aged for around two years. After the wort is boiled, it is pumped into long, low, wide troughs in the attic of the brewery to cool with the windows left open overnight so the wild airborne yeasts can attack the beer to produce fermentation. The beer is then put into very old wooden casks and left to ferment anywhere from two to three years.

Gueuze is a blend of young and old Lambic. When blended, another fermentation takes place in the bottle to create a very lively beer. It's earthy, tart, and very dry and sherry like.

Corsendonk was an Augustinian Priory in the 16th century in Turnhout, and they make a wonderful brown ale in the Dubbel style known in Belgium as Pater Noster (Our Father). It's full of malty goodness with a fruity nose and notes of port, raisins and chocolate.

You can find these, and many more Belgian beers at all Merchant's Warehouse stores and Wine Barrel Plus in Livonia.

MUSSELS STEAMED IN GUEUZE

2 1/2 pounds mussels rinsed, scrubbed and the beards pulled off. (Only use the closed mussels, the open ones are dead)

- 1 small onion, sliced very thin
- 1 small orange, sliced thin
- 1/2 stick butter
- 1/4 cup water
- 1-1/2 cups Gueuze

In a pot big enough to hold everything, pour in water and beer. Add butter, orange and onion slices, then the mussels. Bring pot to a boil then put on a lid and simmer until the mussels open. Be careful not to cook away all the liquid. Reserve the broth for dipping and discard any mussels that did not open. Serves 4.

BEEF CARONADE

2 1/2 pounds beef (use good quality stew beef) cut into 1-inch cubes

Please see TWIST, B2

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Pomegranates
- Lori Lipshaw of West Bloomfield shares a "Slice of Life," a story about a cookbook to benefit children with arthritis.

Call for help!

■ **Butterball Turkey Talk-Line** (800) 522-4448. Around the clock assistance, in person 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 22; and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thanksgiving Day. Automated service available after hours.

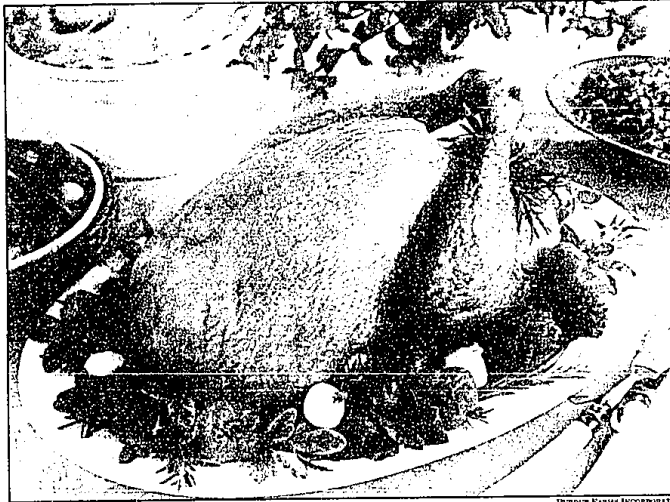
Celebrating its 16th year, the Butterball Turkey Talk-Line will be available 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays after Thanksgiving through Wednesday, Dec. 23. In addition to turkey preparation information, every caller receives free recipe cards that include tips and coupons. Visit the Butterball Web site at www.butterball.com

■ **Ocean Spray consumer helpline** (800) 662-3263. Year-round, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday, including Thanksgiving Day. Consumer department staff fields questions on cranberries, offers recipes, cooking tips, nutritional information, menu planning worksheets, product information.

■ **Land O'Lakes Holiday Bakingline** (800) 782-0606. Personal help available 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., "for baking advice, to request recipes or get help with home baking emergencies." All callers receive a baking leaflet, including recipes. Visit the Reynolds Kitchens Web site www.reynoldskitchens.com

■ **Pendie** (800) 472-7383. Thanksgiving Day from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Consumer representative on hand to "coach" you through cooking dilemmas. Also offers a free booklet with tips on safe handling of poultry.

■ **Reynolds Turkey Tips Line** (800) 745-4000. A 24-hour automated hot line for advice on turkey defrosting, preparation and cooking options. Also offers free Holiday Dinner Solutions brochure and packet of holiday tips and recipes.



Holiday tradition: Golden, roasted turkey is the centerpiece of many Thanksgiving dinners. (Below) Diane Montagano relaxes at home with her dogs. She's having dinner this year with friends, but shared one of her favorite recipes, Cranberry-Pineapple Frozen Salad, and tips for a happy Thanksgiving dinner.

READERS SHARE

Thanksgiving memories

BY KEELY WYCONIK
STAFF WRITER
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Holidays are bittersweet. We celebrate our good fortune and mourn the passing of loved ones. Our memories keep them and their stories alive, and the recipes become family legends.

This year, in addition to family and friends, some of us will mourn the loss of a landmark, the J.L. Hudson's Building in downtown Detroit, imploded on Saturday, Oct. 24.

"The big treat was to go downtown to see Santa and have dinner at Hudson's," said Diane Montagano of Plymouth, who shared her Cranberry-Pineapple Frozen Salad recipe from J.L. Hudson's Northland dining room. "There wasn't anything you couldn't buy at Hudson's. Their Christmas windows were phenomenal; it was a treat just to go there. We always went to the Thanksgiving Day parade with my dad and sister Judy. Sometimes it was very cold."

This year Montagano is having dinner with friends, but she's cooked plenty of Thanksgiving dinners. It's still her favorite dinner of the year. "No surprises is what makes a very nice

Thanksgiving dinner," said Montagano, who retired last year from Fiegl Elementary School after teaching for 37 years. "Be organized and shop ahead."

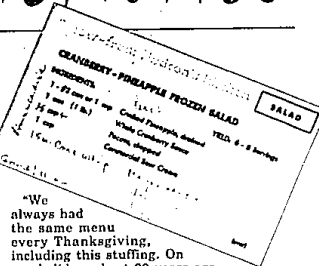
Montagano said she can't leave a recipe alone and modified the Cranberry-Pineapple Frozen Salad recipe she got from Hudson's in 1962 (shown at right). "They featured recipes on cards. They were free, and you picked them up when you paid your bill at the restaurant," she said. "It is refreshing served with Thanksgiving dinner. It's easy, cleanses your palate and is made with easily available ingredients. It can be made ahead. It isn't sweet and has a creamy quality."

Some of our fondest memories involve food. Cam Liebold of Farmington Hills will be missing her father at Thanksgiving this year, but she'll be remembering him ... and his stuffing.

"The following is a recipe for stuffing that we have had every Thanksgiving at my parents' house for as long as I can remember, and I am 41," she wrote. "My dad cooked the turkey and made the dressing every year. I don't know where he got this recipe; he may have even made it up himself, as he was a great cook."



STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL EVERTSON



"We always had the same menu every Thanksgiving, including this stuffing. On one holiday, about 20 years ago, my dad surprised us all by cooking a duck instead of a turkey. My two sisters and I actually 'cried' because he had broken with tradition and we didn't have the turkey and his dressing!"

"He learned his lesson, and at Christmas and all the Thanksgivings and Christmases thereafter, we always had turkey and his special dressing. And because I've been a vegetarian for 18 years, for those 18 years he always remembered to bake some of the dressing outside of the turkey in a casserole dish for me."

"My dad died unexpectedly this past February at the age of 78. We didn't know it at the time, but Thanksgiving and Christmas 1997 were the last times he made his dressing for us. With heavy hearts this year, my sisters and I will make the stuffing this Thanksgiving, in his memory and honor, and we will remember a very special father as we do."

See recipes inside.

SAFE FOOD PREPARATION

BY LOIS M. THIELER
AND SYLVIA TREITMAN
SPECIAL WRITERS

The National Turkey Federation estimates that 90 percent or 225 million Americans eat more than 46 million turkeys on Thanksgiving Day. That's a lot of turkey to eat and keep safe so no one gets food poisoning.

Here are some tips for a safe, happy Thanksgiving.

Turkey

- Buy one pound uncooked turkey per person.
- Do not thaw a frozen turkey at room temperature. There are three safe ways to defrost a turkey. Refrigerator method - Place turkey on a tray to catch drips. Keep turkey in original wrapping. Allow 24 hours defrost time for every 6 pounds of turkey.

Cold water method - Keep turkey in original wrapping or leak-proof bag. Put turkey in large pan and cover with cold tap water. Change water every 30 minutes, replace with fresh cold tap water. Allow 30 minutes per pound to thaw. Cook immediately after thawing.

Microwave method - Follow your microwave oven directions carefully. Cook turkey immediately after thawing.

■ Always roast a turkey at least at 325°F. Anything lower than that is unsafe.

■ Do not partially cook a turkey the day before. Interrupted cooking can actually increase the possibility of bacterial growth. Cook the turkey completely at one time.

■ If you cook a turkey a day ahead, it must be carved off the bone 20-30 minutes after removal from the oven. A whole cooked turkey is too

big and too dense to cool down quickly in the refrigerator.

■ Remove all meat from turkey carcass and refrigerate leftovers including stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, within two hours of serving. Two hours is the maximum amount of time food can be left at room temperature.

■ Always use a meat thermometer in the inner thigh to check temperature. 180-185°F is a safe margin.

■ If you use a turkey oven bag, make sure you shake about a tablespoon of flour into the bag so it won't burst and splatter grease all over the oven.

■ Turkeys do not need frequent basting. Basting actually only penetrates about one-eighth inch into the bird.

■ A dry turkey is caused by roasting too long or in too hot an oven.

■ There is no difference in taste

between a hen or tom turkey. Taste is generally affected by the age of the turkey - however, most of the turkeys in the market are young.

■ Always wash your hands and all equipment and surfaces with hot soapy water before and after handling the raw turkey.

■ Remove the bag of giblets from the inside of the bird, then rinse and drain turkey before roasting.

■ Trust the pop-up timer if the turkey weighs 15 pounds or less. If the turkey is larger, also use a meat thermometer to ensure the internal temperature is 180-185°F.

Stuffing

■ Do not prestuff a turkey. Putting the stuffing in the night before is really risky.

Please see SAFE, B2