

HOME SENSE



LOIS THIELEKE

Planning, timing are ingredients of fabulous feasts

The countdown has begun. It's time to find your recipes, check your staples and wrap up your grocery list for Thanksgiving dinner. Select foods that aren't too fussy. You don't want too many last minute things to do, and you certainly don't want to be in the kitchen all day while everyone else is enjoying themselves.

Turkey is the focal point for Thanksgiving. To determine how much turkey you'll need, the rule of thumb is, a pound of turkey will yield a little less than half a pound of cooked meat. For example, a 26-pound turkey has about 11 to 12 pounds of meat, and about half of that will be white meat.

Of course you'll need to buy a turkey large enough for sandwiches and casseroles for leftovers or planned leftovers.

After the turkey is thawed, thoroughly wash the inside, taking out the neck and giblets. Wash again with cold water, drain and pat dry with paper towels.

Always use a meat thermometer when roasting a turkey. The meat thermometer should be placed in the thigh muscle just above and beyond the lower part of the thigh bone but not touching the bone. Use a meat thermometer even if there is a "pop-up" timer. The meat thermometer in the thigh should register 180° F. If you have stuffed the turkey, the center of the stuffing should be 165° F.

Don't use a roasting temperature of less than 325° F. Roasting a turkey for many hours at 200° F is a real food

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"The Big Thaw - Thaw Thanksgiving Turkey Safely"

"Turkeys must be kept at a safe temperature while they thaw," warns Sylvia Treisman, home economist for the Michigan State University Extension, Oakland County. "Turkey should not be thawed by leaving it out on the counter. Even though the center of the turkey remains frozen, the outer layer may become warm enough to grow bacteria and put you at risk for food poisoning."

There are three safe methods to defrost a turkey:

- **Refrigerator Method**
 - Place turkey on a tray to catch drips
 - Keep turkey in original wrapper
 - Allow 24 hours for each 5 pounds of turkey
- **Cold Water Method**
 - Keep turkey in original wrapper or leak proof bag
 - Put turkey in large pan and cover with cold tap water
 - Change water every 30 minutes 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

"Turkey - To Stuff or Not to Stuff?"

Cooking stuffing separately is the safest way to prepare your turkey. "Bacteria can survive in the stuffing which has not been heated thoroughly," said Treisman. "Even if the turkey itself has reached the proper internal temperature, the stuffing may not have reached a high enough temperature in all parts of the turkey to destroy bacteria."

Safe Stuffing Tips:

- Never pre-stuff a turkey - mix stuffing just before it goes in the oven.
- Stuff loosely - about 3/4 cup stuffing per pound of turkey.
- Place stuffed turkey in a 325° F oven.
- Make sure you use thermometer to check if turkey and stuffing are done. Stuffing should be 165° F. Turkey should be 180° F in thigh before removing it from the oven.
- Within 2 hours of cooking - cut turkey off bones and refrigerate stuffing and leftovers separately.
- For safety it is advisable to bake stuffing separately.

For more information:

- Food and Nutrition Hotline, Michigan State University Extension, Oakland County, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday, (248) 655-0904.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Meat and Poultry Hotline, Recorded message 24 hours, operator available 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., weekdays, (800) 535-4555. Web site <http://www.usda.gov/fais>
- The Reynolds Kitchen Turkey Line, (800) 745-4000, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, through Dec. 31. Reynolds kitchens web site, <http://www.rmc.com/rtap>
- Butterball Turkey Talk Line, daily 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. until Thanksgiving, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thanksgiving Day, (800) 323-4046.

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Spicy blends from Chef Zachary
- Holiday entertaining



STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

Tea time: Brittany Mather, 9, holds the cup for her grandmother Loretta Conway while Brittany's mother Shawn Mather pours, also pictured left to right, are Erin Cain, Donnell Zeidman and Mary Bohn at Heslop's China & Gifts in Novi. Heslop's is participating in a Victorian Holiday Tea sponsored by the City of Farmington Hills, Senior Adult Division. Loretta Conway is senior adult division supervisor for the City of Farmington Hills.

When you're hurried and stressed and in need of a little comfort, a cup of tea really hits the spot.

"My parents were from Ireland and tea was an important part of our lives," said Loretta Conway of Farmington Hills. "We used to imitate our parents and have tea parties," added her sister, Mary Bohn of Rochester Hills.

For them, tea is a symbol of love and warmth. It's a tradition Loretta, senior adult division supervisor for the City of Farmington Hills, passed on to her daughters, Shawn Mather and Donnell Zeidman of West Bloomfield.

"Tea time is special," said Zeidman. "It's story time, when we laugh and catch up," said Shawn. "We are more relaxed, it gives us a chance to slow down. Normally everything's such a rush."

Shawn's daughter, Brittany, 9, has her own tea set. "When she was younger she used to have tea parties with her dolls and friends," said Mather. Tea time is also special for Brittany's older sister, Erin Cain, who is 16.

When Aunt Kitty comes for tea they put away their everyday dishes, and get out the fancy stuff - the good teapot and china. Having tea is an excuse to get "fancied up" and to put out lace doilies, "and other treasures that are safely stored away most of the time."

"Tea goes back to our roots, it gives us warm memories," said Bohn. "When my parents served tea the good china always came out."

Tea time is an old custom that has won many new fans. Nora Dolan, program plan-

Steep in love and friendship

BY KEELY WYGONIK • STAFF WRITER

ner for the senior adult division for the City of Farmington Hills is busy preparing for a Holiday Victorian Tea on Dec. 2. The event, sponsored by the City of Farmington Hills, Senior Adult Division and Manor Care Health Services/Springhouse Assisted Living, sold out shortly after it was announced.

"Tea is hot," said Dolan. "I think it's a wonderful opportunity for ladies of all generations to gather together. It's especially appealing at this festive time of year. In one week we sold 300 tickets for our tea. We hope to make it an annual event."

Holidays and tea seem to go together like cream and sugar, and local tea spots are planning special events. Sweet Afton Tea Room in Plymouth is hosting a dinner on Friday, Dec. 12.

"Tea is a warm and comfortable tradition," said Cynthia Belanger who owns Sweet Afton Tea Room in Plymouth with her mother Nancy Burton. "When you're planning a tea at home for your friends serve two different teas and a variety of finger foods for people to eat."

Doris Lovill, who owns Mrs. Lovill's Tea

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TEA SPOTS

- **Sweet Afton Tea Room** - 450 Forest, Plymouth, (313) 454-0777. Open for lunch and tea 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Sundays are reserved for private parties such as showers. Sweet Afton Tea Room will open for dinner 5-8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 12 during Plymouth's special shopping day, "Home for the Holidays." Stores in Plymouth will stay open until 10 p.m. on that day, and there will be carolers and other surprises to get you in the holiday spirit.
- **Mrs. Lovill's Tea Day** - 32905 Grand River, Farmington, (248) 477-9307, open for lunch and tea 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Saturday. Sundays are reserved for private parties. Mrs. Lovill presents "The Twelve Days of Christmas" - 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 1 through Friday, Dec. 12. Dinner and entertainment, \$45 per person, which includes tax and gratuity. Call for reservations.
- **Victorian Rose** - 118 W. Third, Rochester, (248) 652-8595, open for lunch and tea 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Available for private parties on Sundays and after closing throughout the week. High tea served 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on the first Saturday of every month, \$12 per person, call for reservations. Holiday-themed dinner with entertainment 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 12. The cost is \$80 per couple, call for reservations and information.
- **Townsend Hotel** - 100 Townsend, Birmingham, (248) 642-7000. Afternoon tea served 3-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. In December tea will be served 3-5 p.m. Monday-Saturday. Cost is \$17.95 per person, reservations recommended. Afternoon teas in December will feature a variety of holiday music including children's choir, and musicians performing on violin, dulcimer and piano.
- **The Rite-Center** - 300 Town Center Drive, Dearborn, (313) 441-2100. Tea served 2-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Light Tea (includes scones, pastries, tea sandwiches) \$15. Royal Tea begins with a Chambord cocktail, includes scones, pastries, tea sandwiches, and ends with fresh strawberries marinated in Grand Marnier. \$20. Yuletide teas 2-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday beginning Friday, Nov. 28 to Tuesday, Dec. 30, \$30 per person. Includes Christmas ornament from Poland, representing Mozart or Bach, Light Tea, and seasonal holiday music performed on piano. Tea without ornament is \$20 per person. Reservations recommended.

Dish to pass:
Carolyn Rushlow's Spinach Casserole has been family and kid tested through the years. It's one of her favorite dishes to pass during Thanksgiving dinner.



BRIAN MITCHELL

Dishes to pass are too good to pass up

BY KEELY WYGONIK
STAFF WRITER

This is Carolyn Rushlow's favorite time of year. "I love to cook," said Rushlow of Farmington who shared her Spinach Casserole recipe with us. The casserole has been a staple on the Rushlow table for the last four years. "Everyone loves it," she said.

Rushlow's Spinach Casserole is easy to make and sure to please friends and relatives who don't eat meat.

It's hard to pass up an invitation to gather with family and friends during the holidays. Deciding on a dish to pass can be a challenge.

We asked our readers for some help, and in exchange for their ideas and

recipes shared some newly published cookbooks so they'll have more ideas for a "dish to pass."

Besides getting some really great recipes, I had the chance to catch up with some friends I haven't heard from in a long time.

Peggy (Vautaw) Peck of Redford, wanted to know if my maiden name is Kaleski, and if I went to Fordson High School in Dearborn. Do I look that different from my high school yearbook picture?

Peggy and I worked together on "The Tower Tribune," and I was delighted to hear from her. She shared her Auntie Flo's Fruit Salad recipe made with lime Jell-O, whipped cream, marshmallows,

cream cheese, crushed pineapple and chopped walnuts.

"My mother got it from Auntie Flo, one of the women we lived downstairs from when I was a child," said Peck. "Auntie Flo has been passed away for years, but I hope this recipe lives on. It seems to go real well with turkey, and someone in our family always brings it."

Peck and her husband, Bob, have a son, Gabriel, who's 13. She will be cooking Thanksgiving dinner this year for 10 or 12 people. "I enjoy doing it," she said. "Everyone pitches in, that helps."

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