

Family favorites are sure to be popular at your house

See related Thanksgiving story on Taste front.

SUNSHINE SWEET POTATO BALLS

BY ANNELISE DEISING OF PLYMOUTH

- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes
- 18-20 miniature marshmallows
- 3 cups coarsely crushed corn flakes

Beat butter, milk, sugar, salt and pepper into mashed sweet potatoes.

Form 2-inch balls with marshmallow in the center. Roll in corn flakes.

Place in greased 9"-by-12"-inch baking pan.

Bake in 375°F oven for 25-35 minutes.

May be frozen first, then baked without defrosting for 45 minutes.

Makes 18-20 balls.

BAKED CORN

BY CHERYL GAVEL OF FARMINGTON HILLS

- 1 stick butter
 - 1 can whole kernel corn, drained
 - 1 can cream style corn
 - 8 ounces sour cream
 - 1 package Jiffy corn muffin mix
- Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 1 1/2 quart casserole dish. Place all of the above ingredients in a bowl and mix until well combined. Pour mixture into casserole dish. Bake for 50-60 minutes or until lightly browned.

CORN SOUFFLÉ

BY MARGARET CALLAHAN OF LIVONIA

- 1 box Jiffy Corn Bread Mix
 - 1 stick butter (softened)
 - 1 can creamed corn
 - 1 can whole corn (drained)
 - 1 cup sour cream
 - 2 eggs (well-beaten)
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon pepper
- Mix well. Pour into two-quart bowl or dish. Bake at 350°F for 35 minutes or until firm in center.

GRANDMA CRAWFORD'S CRANBERRY SALAD

BY HELEN CRAWFORD OF WESTLAND

- 2 Three-ounce boxes cherry Jell-O
 - 2 cups hot water
 - 1 can whole cranberry sauce
 - 1 can crushed pineapple (drained)
 - 1/2 cup diced apple
 - 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
 - 1/2 cup chopped celery
- Dissolve Jell-O in hot water. Fold in all remaining ingredients. Chill until firm.

RUSSIAN MUSHROOM CAVIAR

BY TERRY GODFRID-MARECKI OF LIVONIA

- 1/2 pounds fresh mushrooms
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium sized onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise, preferably Hellman's
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- salt and pepper to taste

Clean mushrooms. Chop stems and caps. Heat 3 tablespoons of the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring until they begin to throw off their liquid. Turn up heat to high and continue to cook and stir until mushrooms reabsorb most of the liquid and are lightly browned, 10-12 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside. Heat the remaining oil in the same skillet and sauté the onion until deep golden, about 15 minutes. Combine the mushrooms, onions and garlic in a blender or food processor and process until minced and not pureed. In a large bowl, combine mushroom mixture, mayonnaise, lemon juice, dill, salt and pepper. Mix well, cover and let stand at room temperature for 1 hour. Serve with toast points or black bread. Makes 1 1/2 cups.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUFFLÉ

BY TRACY KENDALL OF LIVONIA

(TRACY ALSO SUBMITTED THE BAKED CORN RECIPE, FROM HER MOTHER CHERYL GAVEL OF FARMINGTON HILLS)

- 2 cups cooked, mashed butternut squash (Tip: Cook by cutting in half, lightly buttering the insides and baking at 350°F for one hour)
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

TIPS FOR A STRESS-FREE DINNER

■ Make part, buy part. Keep it simple. Buy some of your courses and make the rest from scratch. An appetizer or dessert could be purchased from your favorite restaurant or gourmet market. Save time in the kitchen to mingle with the guests.

■ Remember your guests' needs. Keep in mind that all eating lifestyles are not alike. Perhaps you have guests whose religion restricts them from eating certain foods. Perhaps there's a diabetic, vegetarian, or someone in the family allergic to specific foods. Make sure there's food on the table to accommodate everyone.

■ A pinch of good health. Holiday meals are celebrated by feasting - which can lead to overindulging and stomach distress. Offer lighter foods like fruit or vegetables at the beginning and end of the meal to help ease your guests in and out of the heavier turkey and ham main courses.

■ Provide nonalcoholic options. Remember that not everyone drinks alcohol. Keep guests sober by offering options to accompany the champagne and wine. Try sparkling waters and ciders garnished with fresh fruit or spices.

- Source, Susan Bellinson, Whole Foods Market

- 3 eggs
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Preheat oven to 325°F. Lightly grease 1 1/2 quart casserole dish. Mix all of the ingredients in a bowl and beat with electric mixer. When it's well combined, pour into casserole dish. Bake for 75 minutes.

Try something different this Thanksgiving

Americans enjoy over 270 million turkeys each year, making it one of the top five dishes served in the country. That certainly shows that turkey is not just for holidays anymore. Nevertheless, many people have some fears about cooking a large bird and this month I wanted to give you some new and interesting ideas for your family's Thanksgiving get-together.

Nearly all of the 95 percent of Americans who ate turkey dinners last Thanksgiving expressed an interest in experimenting with nontraditional methods of cooking turkey, such as deep-frying, brining, smoking, pit roasting and grilling. So why not surprise your friends and family this year with something different?

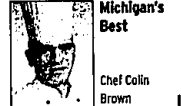
Why not marinate the turkey in seasoned liquids both to absorb flavor and tenderize? Most marinades contain an acid such as vinegar, citrus juice, wine, herbs and spices. One of the easiest ways to marinate a turkey is by using a needle-like injector which can be purchased at any kitchen supply store for \$10-\$15. To marinate a turkey without an injector, simply use a fork to make random holes over the entire bird. Place the turkey and marinade in a large bag and leave overnight.

This is one of my favorite herb marinades.

- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

LEMON AND GARLIC MARINADE

- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 6-8 cloves fresh garlic, peeled
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Parsley or other fresh herbs



Michigan's Best Chef Colin Brown

In blender, combine olive oil and lemon juice. While blending, drop in garlic cloves one at a time. Gradually add lemon zest, then the herbs of your choice. Continue to blend until mixture is pureed.

SWEET AND SOUR CRANBERRY SAUCE

- 6 cups fresh cranberries
- 3 cups sugar
- 2 1/2 cups turkey stock
- 3-4 cloves
- Cinnamon stick

Combine fresh cranberries, turkey stock, sugar, cinnamon stick and cloves in non-reactive pan; bring to boil. Simmer for 20 minutes, stirring well. Remove from heat. Crack peppercorns into sauce and allow sauce to sit for 20 minutes. Pour through a fine strainer and gently reheat, adjusting thickness as necessary. Discard strained spices and cranberry skins. With most people serving stuffing, why not try this for a change?

GINGER CITRUS RICE

- Serving: 12
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh ginger root, peeled and grated
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 4 cups water
- 2 cups basmati rice
- 2 teaspoons salt
- Large lime, zested and juiced

In 3-quart saucepan over medium heat, heat canola oil until very hot, but not smoking. Add ginger root and ground cumin and cook for 1 minute. Add 4 cups water and bring to a boil. Stir in rice and salt. Reduce heat to low; cover and cook 15 to 18 minutes until all water is absorbed and rice is tender. Stir in the lime juice and zest.

Chef Colin Brown is executive chef of The Townsend Hotel in Birmingham. You can e-mail him at www.chef@townsendhotel.com.

TURKEY

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deeply, 160°F in the center of the stuffing, if turkey is stuffed. Before removing stuffing and carving, let turkey stand 15 minutes to allow juices to set and stuffing temperature to rise to 165°F.

■ Where does the meat thermometer go? When using an oven-safe meat thermometer, insert the thermometer in the thigh prior to placing the turkey in the oven and leave in while the turkey is roasting. Position the thermometer so it can be read while the turkey is in the oven. When using an instant-read meat thermometer, do not leave the thermometer in the turkey during roasting. Insert in thigh and/or stuffing to take the temperature.

■ How can leftover turkey be stored properly? Within two hours after roasting, remove stuffing from

turkey and carve meat off bones. Then, chill in refrigerator before wrapping for storage. Wrap turkey and stuffing separately and use within three days. To store in the freezer, wrap turkey and stuffing separately in heavy foil, freezer wrap or place in freezer container or bags. For optimum flavor, use stuffing within one month and turkey within two months.

■ What's the proper way to stuff a turkey? Use only cooked meats and seafood (oysters), and use pasteurized egg products instead of raw eggs. Place prepared stuffing in turkey just before roasting. Do not stuff the turkey the night before roasting. Stuff both neck and body cavities of completely thawed turkey, allowing 1/2 to 1 cup of stuffing per pound of turkey. Do not pack stuffing tightly in turkey. Return legs to original tucked position, if untucked for rinsing or stuffing.

■ How much turkey should I buy? Figure 1 to 1 1/2 pounds of turkey per person.

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