

A NOT-SO-TRADITIONAL THANKSGIVING

BY JENNIFER CHANDLER / FOOD STYLIST PHOTOGRAPHY BY NATALIE ROOT

I don't know about you, but Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays. It is the one day of the year where it is acceptable—even encouraged—to eat seconds, thirds or even fourths! For someone who loves to eat, this is heaven.

Ever since I can remember, we have eaten the same meal for our Turkey Day feast. My grandmother probably learned from her grandmother the same recipes that my dad has used since I was a kid. Almost every family has their own holiday-meal traditions. Whether it is for Thanksgiving, a holiday feast or a New Year's Day brunch, your family probably prepares the same, delicious banquet year after year.

We all savor traditions. Their continuity provides comfort and a sense of family pride. In particular, mealtime traditions are where a family's heritage is passed on from one generation to the next.

With that said, I am sure you will all agree that there are family dishes that you adore and would never consider changing. But on the other hand, there are some things that either need to go or need a serious face-lift. Consider this your opportunity to make your contribution to your family's culinary heritage. Or—on a not so serious note—your chance to jazz-up your holiday meal.

Don't feel that you need to revamp the entire menu. Just start with a dish or two. Begin with ones you know are the least eaten year after year. Or maybe make one batch the traditional way and another of your new jazzed-up version. That way, no one will complain that their favorite dish is absent.

Accessories available at Macy's.

Green Beans With Orange
and Rosemary Gremolata







Wild Rice, Apple and Dried-Cranberry Stuffing

HERB ROASTED WINTER VEGETABLES

Serves 12

Nonstick vegetable oil spray
 1/2 cup olive oil
 3 red beets, peeled and cut into small wedges
 8 shallots, peeled and halved
 2 acorn squash, unpeeled, halved, seeded and cut into thin wedges
 2 turnips, peeled and cut into wedges
 2 parsnips, peeled and cut into small pieces
 1 rutabaga, peeled and cut into wedges
 12 garlic cloves, peeled
 2 tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
 salt
 pepper

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Spray two large baking sheets with nonstick spray.

Combine the beets, a large pinch of thyme and 1 tbsp. olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Place on one side of one of the prepared pans.

Combine all the remaining vegetables, thyme, garlic and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Divide evenly between the prepared pans.

Roast the vegetables for 1 to 1/2 hours, stirring occasionally, until all the vegetables are tender.

GREEN BEANS WITH ORANGE AND ROSEMARY GREMOLATA

Serves 10

2 lbs. green beans, trimmed
 3 garlic cloves, minced
 2 tbsp. fresh flat-leaf parsley, minced
 1 tbsp. fresh rosemary, minced
 1 tbsp. grated orange peel
 1 tsp. grated lemon peel
 4 tbsp. butter
 1/2 cup chicken broth
 2 tbsp. frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed
 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
 salt
 pepper

Cook the green beans in a pot of boiling salted water until just tender. Drain and rinse under cool water to stop the cooking process.

Mix the garlic, parsley, rosemary, orange peel and lemon peel in a small bowl. In a separate bowl, reserve about 1 tbsp. for garnish.

Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add gremolata, and stir for

about 30 seconds. Add the broth, orange juice concentrate and lemon juice, and bring to a simmer. Add the green beans. Cook until the beans are heated through, about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to a serving dish, and sprinkle with reserved gremolata.

WILD RICE, APPLE AND DRIED-CRANBERRY STUFFING

Serves 10

1 cup wild rice
 6 cups crusty white bread cut into small cubes
 1 stick butter
 2 cups diced onion
 2 cups diced celery
 2 cups diced apple
 1/4 cup minced flat-leaf parsley
 1 1/2 tsp. dried sage
 1/2 tsp. dried thyme
 Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
 1 cup dried cranberries
 1 cup chicken stock
 Nonstick cooking spray

Cook the rice according to package directions. Pour into a baking pan, and set aside to cool completely.

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Toast the bread cubes on a baking sheet until dry, about 20 minutes.

Melt the butter in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Then cook the onion and celery, stirring, until softened, about 8 minutes. Add the apple and cook, stirring, about 5 more minutes. Add the herbs, and season with salt and pepper to taste. Cook, stirring, for about 2 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl, and toss with rice, bread and dried cranberries.

Increase the oven temperature to 450° F, and spray a 9- by 13-inch pan with nonstick cooking spray.

Spread the stuffing evenly in prepared pan, and drizzle with the chicken stock. Bake, covered tightly with foil, until heated through, about 20 minutes. Remove foil, and bake about 10 minutes more to brown the top.

MASHED BUTTERNUT SQUASH

From *Barefoot Contessa Family Style*

by Ina Garten

Serves 6

2 medium butternut squash (4 to 5 lbs. total)
 6 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
 1/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar

Mashed Butternut Squash



Brussels Sprouts with Chestnuts, Pancetta and Parsley



1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup half-and-half

Preheat the oven to 400° F.

Cut off and discard the ends of the butternut squash. Peel the squash, cut them in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Cut the squash into 3/4-inch cubes, and place them on a baking sheet. Add the melted butter, brown sugar, salt and pepper. Toss all the ingredients together, and spread in a single layer. Roast for 40 minutes, or until the squash is very tender. While roasting, turn the squash once with a spatula to be sure it cooks evenly. Don't let it brown.

In two batches, transfer the squash, the pan liquids and the half-and-half to a bowl of a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Pulse until the squash is coarsely pureed. It should have the consistency of mashed potatoes. To keep hot, place the puree in a bowl sitting over a pot of simmering water and stir. Season to taste, and serve hot.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH CHESTNUTS, PANCETTA AND PARSLEY

From *Feast* by Nigella Lawson
Serves 8 to 10

2 lbs. brussels sprouts
8 oz. pancetta, rind removed and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 tbsp. vegetable oil
2 tsp. butter
1 1/2 cups (8 oz.) vacuum-packed chestnuts
1/4 cup Marsala
1 large bunch parsley, chopped to give about 1 cup
Freshly ground pepper

Trim the bottoms off each of the sprouts, cutting across into each as you go. Then tip them into a large pan of salted boiling water, and cook until tender but still retaining a bit of bite, about 5 minutes or so depending on size. Drain.

Meanwhile, in a pan large enough to take everything later, cook the pancetta cubes in the oil, until they are bronzed and crisp, but not cooked to the point of drying out.

Add the butter and the chestnuts. With a wooden spoon or spatula, press on the chestnuts to break them up a little. When they're warmed through, turn the heat up and throw in the Marsala, letting it bubble away, fusing with the pancetta fat and chestnutty butter to form a glorious savory syrup. Add the drained sprouts and turn well, sprinkling in half of the parsley as you do so. Season with pepper. You shouldn't need salt, given the pancetta, but, obviously, taste to see. Decant to a serving plate, and sprinkle over the remaining chopped parsley.

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