

SAZ'S™

Cooking Notes

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Thanksgiving Tips

The Holiday for Cooks

There is a holiday for almost everything, but for those who enjoy cooking Thanksgiving is *the* day. Family and football are important, but food is the star. Whether you enjoy a traditional meal of turkey and all the fixins, or prefer to venture into an ultra creative spin on tradition, there is fun to be had.

So what inspires you? If you're happy with your traditional family meal, enjoy! But consider trying one new thing. If you're thinking, "I really do love to cook, but frankly Thanksgiving is a bore," then refocus. You can do so many things with a turkey. My uncle would thread citrus through the bird with a larding needle. You can get creative with the sauce. Try a new side. Make a pie to please the eye. We've got some ideas and sources to get you started.

Not a fan of the basic bird? Take your turkey for a spin and try a glaze for a flavor shift. Here are a few ingredients to experiment with:

- cranberries, orange rind/juice, brown sugar and Worcestershire
- apricot jam, brown sugar, dijon mustard, ketchup and soy sauce
- raspberries, orange juice/peel, sugar
- dark rum, brown sugar, butter, cinnamon and nutmeg
- one of our favorites, and oh so simple, Saz's Original BBQ, Sassy BBQ or Vidalia Cooking Sauce

You might want to try adding Grand Marnier or Port to your cranberry sauce. Nothing shocking, but a nice blast of flavor. Orange zest is another simple way to take cranberry sauce to new level.

If you want some new thoughts on *Thanksgiving Side Dishes*, Saveur Magazine offers some ideas ranging from turnip souffle to sweet potato bread pudding: <http://www.saveur.com/gallery/Thanksgiving-Side-Dishes>

Stuffing is sacred ground I've found, but if you're feeling adventurous, foodnetwork.com brings it on with everything from corn bread stuffing to artichoke-sausage stuffing at <http://www.foodnetwork.com/thanksgiving-stuffing-and-dressing-recipes/package/index.html>

If you're looking for a little more hands on instruction, check out the instructional videos at epicurious:

<http://www.epicurious.com/articlesguides/holidays/thanksgiving/thanksgiving?mbid=RF>

Turkey dinner and wine go together like beer and brats. A few varieties to consider include Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Noir, Syrah (or Shiraz) and this year's vintage of Beaujolais Nouveau.

Bon Appetit!

