

HEALTHIER HOMEMADE

THANKSGIVING GUIDE



THANKSGIVING *Guide*

A Week Prep Plan for Stress-Free Holiday Hosting

From Healthier Homemade

Your Thanksgiving Menu

Main Course

- Brined Turkey (14 lbs) - choose Hot Honey or Lemon variation

Sides

- Homemade Stuffing
- Mashed Potatoes
- GF Sweet Potato Casserole
- Orange and Clove Cranberries
- Green Bean Casserole

Desserts

- Gluten Free Pumpkin Pie
- Cheesecake Cups

Your Week-Long Prep Timeline

Work backwards from your meal time and mark these on your calendar:

4 Days Before Meal Time

- Lay out bread to air dry for stuffing (1/2 loaf sourdough + 1/2 loaf whole wheat)
- Make Orange and Clove Cranberries - store in fridge (can serve warm or cold)
- **CRITICAL- make sure the turkey is in the refrigerator defrosting**

3 Days Before Meal Time

- Make Cream of Mushroom Soup - store in fridge Make mini
- cheesecakes - store in freezer - remove the night before

2 Days Before Meal Time

- Make Mashed Potatoes - store in fridge, reheat in oven before serving
- Make Sweet Potato Casserole - store in fridge until ready to bake
- Sautee Vegetables for stuffing

1 Day Before Meal Time (24 Hours Before)

- **START TURKEY BRINE - This is critical timing! Brine for 16-24 hours total.**

For Hot Honey Turkey: Mix 128 oz apple juice + 1 cup pickling salt + 1 onion (chopped) + 1 bulb garlic (peeled & chopped) + 2 tsp all-spice + 2 lemons (cut) + thyme + bay leaves + rosemary

For Lemon Turkey: Mix 128 oz water + 1 1/2 cup kosher salt + 2 lemons (sliced) + lemon juice from 1 lemon + 6 garlic cloves (halved) + 2 tsp Italian seasoning + sage leaves + 1/4 cup white vinegar

- Pre-boil green beans for 10 minutes, drain, mix in a dish for green bean casserole and store in fridge
- Bake pumpkin pie crust for 12 minutes, let cool, add filling and bake 60-70 min - cool overnight

Day-Of Timeline

Fill in your actual meal time and work backwards. Turkey needs 3.5-4 hours total (including rest time).

_____ Hours Before Meal Time

(Aim for 5-6 hours before meal time to start your day)

- Pull turkey from brine, pat completely dry with paper towels
- Let turkey come to room temperature (1-2 hours)
- Slice or break bread into cubes for stuffing

4 Hours Before Meal Time

- Preheat oven to 325°F
- Prepare turkey for roasting:
- Place on roasting pan breast side up, tuck wing tips, tie legs
- Stuff cavity with 2 chopped onions + 2 quartered lemons
- Rub with 3 tbsp olive oil
 - Put turkey in oven, bake 30 minutes

3.5 Hours Before Meal Time

- If making Hot Honey Turkey: Mix glaze (1 cup hot honey + 1/3 cup sweet chili + 2 tbsp coco aminos)
- If making Lemon Turkey: Skip glaze, turkey will self-baste
- For Hot Honey: Baste turkey with glaze, repeat every 45 minutes

2 Hours Before Meal Time

- Pull mashed potatoes from fridge to come to room temp for an hour
- Start making stuffing: slice bread for stuffing and finish making the stuffing
- Prep onions for green bean casserole: slice onion, soak in wine, toss in flour mixture and air fry at 350 for 15 minutes flipping half way through.

1.5 Hours Before Meal Time

- Put sweet potato casserole in oven (if turkey still has room at 350°F)
- Transfer stuffing to greased pie pan, bake at 325°F for 30-45 minutes

1 Hour Before Meal Time

- Put mashed potatoes in oven at 325°F for approximately 45 minutes until heated through (cover to prevent drying)
- Assemble green bean casserole (beans + soup in dish)

45 Minutes Before Meal Time

- Check turkey temp - breast should reach 165°F, thighs 175°F
- If turkey is done, remove and let rest 20-30 minutes before carving

30 Minutes Before Meal Time

- Top green bean casserole with crispy onions, bake covered for 30 minutes

15 Minutes Before Meal Time

- Pull all dishes from oven Warm
- cranberries if serving warm Carve
- turkey Transfer everything to serving
- dishes

Pro Tips for Success

Turkey Tips

- Thaw turkey in advance: 24 hours for every 4-5 lbs (14 lb turkey = 3-4 days in fridge)
- After 8-12 hours in brine, flip the turkey and brine another 8-12 hours
- For Lemon Turkey: Place remaining lemon slices on top of turkey before roasting
- Use a meat thermometer - don't guess! Here is the link to my favorite

Make-Ahead Magic

- Most sides can be made 2 days ahead and reheated - this saves your sanity! Mashed potatoes reheat beautifully - add a pat of butter on top before reheating. When you make ahead, store the mashed potatoes in an oven safe dish you want to serve them in. Cranberries are even better after sitting a day - flavors meld Don't cook stuffing inside the bird - it's safer and easier in a pan
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Oven Space Strategy

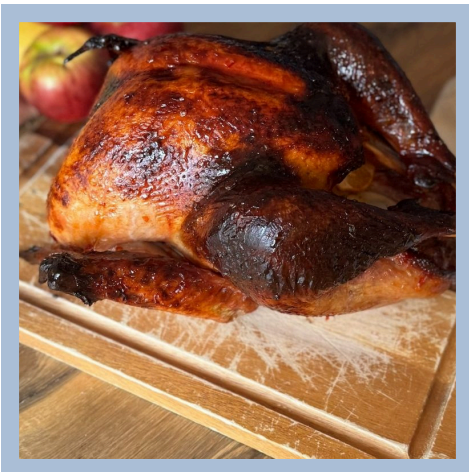
- Many dishes can share oven space at 325-350°F
- Put sweet potatoes and stuffing in while turkey finishes
- Once turkey comes out to rest, crank heat to 350°F for final dishes
- Cover dishes with foil to prevent drying out
- You can use a slowcooker to reheat the mashed potatoes if you are out of oven space

Stress-Less Secrets

- Set the table the night before
- Pull out all serving dishes and label with sticky notes (my favorite hack) Do this in advance so you make sure you have the right ones and enough. Home Goods is great if you need more dishes.
- Pre-boiling the green beans means zero stress on the day of
- Keep a printed copy of this timeline on your counter for reference

You've got this! Happy Thanksgiving!

For more stress-free meal planning, visit HealthierHomemade.co



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Hot Honey Spiced Turkey

Recipe:

Ingredients:

- 128 oz organic apple juice
- 1 cup pickling salt
- 1 organic onion chopped
- 1 bulb garlic peeled and chopped
- 2 tsp all-spice
- 2 organic lemon
- 1 sprig thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 sprig rosemary
- Hot Honey Glaze
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup organic hot honey
- ½ cup sweet chili
- 2 tbsp coco aminos
- Stuff Turkey
- 2 organic onions chopped
- 2 organic lemons cut into 4's

1. **IMPORTANT!** Thaw the turkey well in advance- move the turkey from the freezer to the refrigerator 24 hours every 4-5 lbs. An example: A 16 lb. turkey= 4 days in the refrigerator to thaw.
2. Remove the giblet bag and neck inside.
3. In a large bowl combine **128 oz organic apple juice** and **1 cup pickling salt**. Whisk until the salt is dissolved.
4. Add in **1 organic onion** peeled and chopped, **1 bulb garlic** chopped, **2 tsp all-spice**.
5. Place a large tray on the counter and then place the basting bag in the tray. Place the turkey in the bag (remove the gizzards etc. Pour in the apple cider mixture (this is a 2 person job).
6. Add in the **2 organic lemons** cut, **1 sprig thyme**, **2 bay leaves**, **1 sprig rosemary**.
7. Wrap tightly so the liquid is around most of the turkey. Place in the refrigerator.
8. After 8-12 hours, flip and let soak another 8-12 hours.
9. When you are ready to cook the turkey, bring inside.
10. Preheat the oven to 325°F
11. On a roasting pan, place the turkey breast side up. Tuck the wing tips underneath and tie the legs loosely together with kitchen twine. Inside the turkey cavity, place **2 organic onions chopped** and **2 organic lemons** cut.
12. Blot the turkey dry with a paper towel. Rub with extra virgin olive oil. **3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil**. Place in the oven and bake 30 minutes.
13. Mix together **1 cup organic hot honey**, **½ cup sweet chili**, **2 tbsp coco aminos**.
14. Slide the turkey out from the oven slightly. Baste with the hot honey mixture until thinly coated. Do this about every 45 minutes.
15. Continue baking until the thickest part of the breast reaches 165°F and the thighs 175°F. with a meat thermometer.
16. Once done, remove and let rest 20-30 minutes. before carving.



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Lemon Brined Turkey

Recipe:

Ingredients:

- 1 organic whole turkey
- 128 oz water
- 1½ cup kosher salt
- 2 lemons sliced
- 1 lemon juiced
- 6 garlic cloves sliced in half
- 2 tsp Italian seasoning
- 5 sage leaves
- ¼ cup white vinegar
- 2 organic onions chopped and 2 organic lemons.

1. IMPORTANT! Thaw the turkey well in advance- move the turkey from the freezer to the refrigerator 24 hours every 4-5 lbs. An example: A 16 lb. turkey= 4 days in the refrigerator to thaw.
2. Remove the giblet bag and neck inside.
3. In a large bowl combine 128 oz water, 1½ cup kosher salt, 1 of the 2 lemons sliced, the juice of 1 lemon , 6 garlic cloves , 2 tsp Italian seasoning, 5 sage leaves and ¼ cup white vinegar.
4. Place a large tray on the counter and then place the basting bag in the tray. Place the turkey in the bag .
5. Pour the brine into the bag (this is a 2 person job)
6. Wrap tightly so the liquid is around most of the turkey. Place in the refrigerator.
7. After 8-12 hours, flip and let soak another 8-12 hours.
8. When you are ready to cook the turkey, remove from refrigerator.
9. Preheat the oven to 325°F
10. On a roasting pan, place the turkey breast side up. Tuck the wing tips underneath and tie the legs loosely together with kitchen twine. Inside the turkey cavity, place **2 organic onions chopped** and **2 organic lemons**.
11. Blot the turkey dry with a paper towel. Rub with extra virgin olive oil. **3 tbsps extra virgin olive oil**.
12. As juices collect, about every hour baste the turkey.
13. Continue baking until the thickest part of the breast reaches 165°F and the thighs 175°F. with a meat thermometer.
14. Once done, remove and let rest 20-30 minutes. before carving.



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CREAM OF MUSHROOM SOUP

Ingredients:

2 tbsp beef tallow -
2 onions, finely chopped -
1 tsp Himalayan salt
3 cups finely chopped mushrooms
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
3 tbsp white whole wheat flour
3 crushed garlic cloves
2 1/2 cups milk

Recipe:

1. Heat a saucepan on medium heat.
2. Add in beef tallow, onions, salt and mushrooms.
3. Sauté until cooked through and bits starts to stick.
4. Add in white wine and simmer 1-2 minutes until evaporated.
5. Add in flour until coated.
6. Add in garlic and milk and once simmering reduce to low. Continue to stir until desired thickness. Around 15 minutes.

NOTES

I like to blend the soup at the end with an immersion blender or food processor. You can leave chunky as well. This is the consistency for a can of soup substitute. To serve as a bowl of soup add more liquid. The key to creaminess is cooking it down low and slow.



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Green Bean Casserole

Ingredients:

Cream of Mushroom Soup

- 2 tbsp. beef tallow or butter
 - 2 onions finely chopped
 - 1 tsp. pink Himalayan salt
 - 3 cups finely chopped mushrooms
 - 1/2 cup dry white wine
 - 3 tbsp. all-purpose Einkorn flour or organic flour
 - 3 crushed garlic cloves
 - 2 1/2 cups organic whole milk
- #### Crispy Onions
- 1 sweet onion sliced
 - 1 tbsp. dry white wine
 - 1/3 cup flour
 - 1 tsp. Himalayan salt
 - 1/2 tsp. paprika
 - 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- #### Putting Together
- 1 cup homemade cream of mushroom soup
 - 1 lb. French green beans
 - 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
 - 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

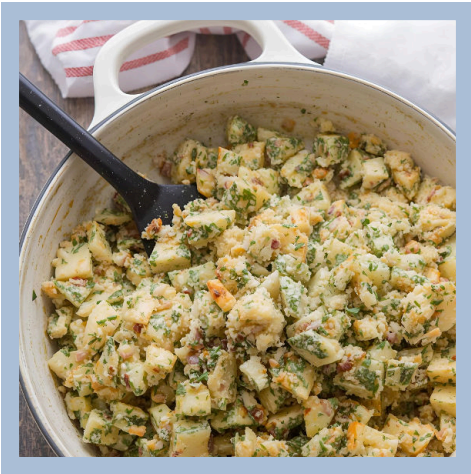
Recipe:

Crispy Onions

1. In a small bowl, toss together 1 sweet onion sliced into rings and 1 tbsp. dry white wine. Let soak 10-15 minutes.
2. In another small bowl mix together 1/3 cup flour, 1 tsp. Himalayan salt, 1/2 tsp. paprika, 1/2 tsp. garlic powder.
3. Toss the soaked onions into the flour mixture and add in 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil. Lightly toss until all of the onions are coated.
4. Place in an air fryer pre heated to 375°F and cook for 5 minutes, flip and cook again. Air fryers can vary, so remove once they are crispy. The time might need to be adjusted.

Putting Together

5. Steam the green beans.
6. Place in a greased casserole dish
7. Mix in 1 cup homemade cream of mushroom soup and stir well. You can add up to 2 cups if you like it creamier.
8. Add the crispy onion on top.
9. Place in the oven 20- 25 minutes until bubbly.
10. Remove and serve immediately.



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HOMEMADE STUFFING

Ingredients:

1/2 loaf sourdough bread
1/2 loaf whole wheat bread
1/4 cup butter
1 cup finely chopped celery
1 cup finely chopped onion
3/4 cup grated carrots
32 oz. chicken bone broth
-3/4 tsp. poultry seasoning

Recipe:

1. Slice bread and lay bread out to dry a few days before. Slice or break the bread into cubes the day you are baking.
2. In a skillet put the butter, celery, onion and carrot. Sauté until onions are glazed and carrots are softened.
3. In a large bowl toss in the bread, sautéed vegetables, a few of the crumbs, poultry seasoning and start adding in the broth. Add in until the bread is moistened. The amount will vary based on how dry and dense your bread is. Let rest 15 minutes.
4. Pour into a greased pie pan and bake at 325 for 30-45 min.

NOTES

BE SURE TO LAY OUT BREAD A FEW DAYS BEFORE. Be sure to scoop up the crumbs when you break or cut the bread to use in the recipe.



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Simple Mashed Potatoes

Ingredients:

water
10 potatoes peeled, sliced 2 inches
thick
2 tsp pink Himalayan salt
¼ tsp black pepper
2 tbsp organic butter
¼ cup organic milk

Recipe:

1. In a large stock pot, fill ¾ full with water.
2. Place over medium/high heat and bring to a boil.
3. Place 10 potatoes prepped into the water. Let boil 10-15 minutes until potatoes are tender.
4. Strain the water and return to pan or bowl that won't get scratched using a beater.
5. Immediately add in 2 tsp pink Himalayan salt, ¼ tsp black pepper, 2 tbsp organic butter and ¼ cup organic milk. Whip with a hand mixer until smooth.



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Gluten-Free Pumpkin Pie

Ingredients:

For Crust:

1.5 C Oat Flour
1/4 tsp salt
1/2 C butter, melted
1/2 C coconut sugar Pie

Filling

14.5 oz can pumpkin puree
2 eggs
1 C coconut sugar
1/4 tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla
1/4 C maple syrup
1/3 C heavy whipping cream
1 tsp pumpkin pie spice

Recipe:

1. Preheat oven to 350
2. Butter a 9in tart or pie pan
3. Mix crust ingredients, press into pie pan, Pierce with small holes and bake 12 min.
4. While pie crust is baking, mix together pie filling ingredients.
5. Once pie crust is done and cooled 10 min, add pie filling and bake uncovered for 1 hr to 1 hr 10 min. Until pie is set but has a slight jiggle in the middle.
6. TIP: Can also insert a toothpick half way between edge and middle, if its clean its ready!
7. Allow to cool overnight
8. Serve with homemade whipped cream!



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Cheesecake Cups

Ingredients:

Crust:

9 crushed graham crackers
2 tbsp. butter melted
1 1/2 tbsp. coconut sugar

Filling:

2 packages cream cheese
2 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
1/2 c. coconut sugar
1/4 c. maple syrup
topping of choice

Recipe:

1. Preheat oven to 350.
2. Combine the graham crackers, butter and coconut sugar.
3. Place baking cups in a cupcake tray and press 1-2 tbsp of mixture at the bottom.
4. bake for 5 minutes in the oven and remove.
5. In a bowl blend the filling ingredients. Scoop on top of the graham cracker crust and fill almost to the top.
6. Top with your topping of choice.
7. Bake 18-25 minutes or until cracks start to form.
8. Cool in the refrigerator for a minimum of 2 hours.

NOTES

I like to crush up candy bars or small truffles for the topping.



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ORANGE AND CLOVE CRANBERRIES

Ingredients:

- 1 bag Cranberries
- 1 C coconut sugar
- 1/2-3/4 C maple syrup
- 3 oranges, zested and juiced
- 1/4 tsp cloves
- 1 tsp cinnamon

Recipe:

1. In a pot, add cranberries, coconut sugar, maple syrup, orange zest and juice, clove, and cinnamon.
2. Turn on heat to med and allow to cook and break down into a thick sauce. Stir Frequently. If needed, use a potato masher to get any larger pieces.
3. Serve warm or store in fridge and serve cold.