

Recipes to enhance your Thanksgiving Day dinner

Sick of the same old boring pumpkin pie, mashed potatoes and gravy, and store-bought rolls? Here are some recipes you may want to consider that could help elevate your Thanksgiving dinner and make you an instant hero with your guests!



Yeast Rolls

While homemade rolls take a bit more effort than just buying rolls, the better flavor and texture of the bread makes it all worthwhile.

Stir together 1/4 cup warm water, 1 package of yeast, and 1 tablespoon of honey in a small bowl and let stand for 5 minutes. Stir salt into 3 C flour in a large bowl, then add yeast mixture, 1 C buttermilk and 1/4 C butter, stirring until a soft dough forms.

Knead dough for 6 to 10 minutes. Form dough into a ball and transfer to an oiled large bowl, turning to coat. Cover bowl with kitchen towel and let dough rise for 1 hour. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

Cut dough into 18 equal pieces. Shape down into round ball and arrange them 1 inch apart on baking sheet. Cover loosely with kitchen towel and let rolls rise for 1 hour. Brush rolls lightly with egg wash and bake at 375 degrees until rolls are golden brown and sound hollow when tapped on bottom...15 to 18 minutes.

Mashed Potatoes, Upgraded

Most families make mashed potatoes for Thanksgiving dinner, but some ways to elevate mashed potatoes is adding something extra to them.

Some suggestions:

- mix basic white potatoes with rutabaga potatoes to get a crispy texture to them
- Instead of using plain potatoes, blend yucca with cilantro and pepper paste to give it more of a spicy flavor
- mix celery root into mashed potatoes to give it a more tart, earthy flavor
- mix some cheese into the mashed potatoes to give the potatoes a more dynamic flavor
- adding Dijon mustard to mashed potatoes gives it a more sour flavor and makes the potatoes taste and smell amazing!

Bourbon Pumpkin Cheesecake

For those of you sick of pumpkin pie and looking for a different Thanksgiving pumpkin dessert, this utilizes a pecan crust, pumpkin cheesecake filling, and a bourbon topping to give the cake a nice flavor. It can easily be made the day before and chilled overnight to serve on Thanksgiving.

For the crust: Stir together 3/4 C graham cracker crumbs, 1/2 C pecans, 1/4 C of brown sugar and granulated sugar, and 1/4 C butter in a bowl until combined well. Press crumb mixture evenly onto bottom and 1/2 inch up side of springform pan, then chill crust for 1 hour.

For filling: Whisk together 1 1/2 C pumpkin, 3 eggs, 1/2 C brown sugar, 2 tbsp cream, 1 tsp vanilla, until combined.

Stir together 1/2 C granulated sugar, 1 tbsp cornstarch, 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon, 1/2 tsp nutmeg, 1/2 tsp ginger, and 1/2 tsp salt in large bowl. Add 24 oz. cream cheese and beat with an electric mixer at high speed until creamy and smooth, about 3 minutes. Reduce speed to medium, then add pumpkin mixture and beat until smooth. Pour filling into crust, smoothing top, then put springform pan in a shallow baking pan (in case springform leaks). Bake at 350 degrees until center is just set, 50 to 60 minutes. Transfer to rack and cool 5 minutes.

For topping: Whisk together 2 C sour cream, 2 tbsp granulated sugar, 1 tbsp bourbon in a bowl, then spread on top of cheesecake and bake 5 minutes. Cool cheesecake completely in pan on rack, about 3 hours. Chill, covered, for 4 hours. Remove side of pan and bring to room temperature before serving.

