

A Healthy & Easy

Thanksgiving Menu

6 Delicious Dishes You'll Be Grateful for This Year

Plus Turkey Day
wellness tips,
CDC holiday safety
reminders and a bonus
grocery shopping list



FRANCES LARGEMAN-ROTH

A Healthy & Easy Thanksgiving



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CDC Holiday Safety Guidelines

Low-risk ways to celebrate Thanksgiving this year

1. Have A Small Dinner

Enjoy a cozy dinner with only those who live in your household. Or, opt for a limited outdoor gathering and follow the [CDC's recommendations for safe cook-outs](#).

2. Celebrate Virtually

To avoid travel and large gatherings, have your meal with loved ones over video chat. Make the moment special by sharing a dessert or cocktail recipe for everyone to make. Or send grandma and grandpa a craft kit to make virtually with the kids.

3. Make Contactless Deliveries

If you're preparing Thanksgiving dishes for friends, family, or neighbors, deliver them in a way that avoids direct contact with them.

4. Shop Online for Black Friday

Skip the stores (and the crowds) on Black Friday by shopping for deals online

5. Avoid In-Person Sporting Events, Parades & Races

If you live in an area where there will be Turkey Day sporting events, parades, or races, opt to stay home, watch them on TV, and/or participate on your own.

For more holiday safety guidelines, [click here](#).



Herb Roasted Turkey Breast

If you are feeding a small crowd for Thanksgiving this year, opt for herb-roasted turkey breast instead of the whole bird. It'll save you so much time (I'm talking hours!) without sacrificing on flavor.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 whole bone-in turkey breast, 6.5-7 pounds
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary leaves
- 2 teaspoons fresh sage leaves
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup dry white wine, chicken broth, or water

SERVINGS: 10

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Arrange a rack in a large roasting pan and place the turkey breast on it, skin side up.
2. On a cutting board, chop the herbs with the salt, spreading your knife over the mixture to make a paste. With clean hands, loosen the skin from the turkey breast and spread the herb mixture evenly over the breast. Brush the olive oil over the turkey skin. Pour the wine, broth or water on the bottom of the roasting pan.
3. Roast the turkey for 1.5-2 hours, until the skin is golden and an instant-read thermometer registers 165°F when inserted into the thickest part of the breast. Check the turkey after it has been cooking for an hour and 15 minutes; if the skin is getting too brown, cover the turkey breast with foil.
4. Remove the turkey breast from the oven and let rest for 15 minutes to allow the juices to evenly distribute. Carve the turkey and serve.

Time Saving Turkey Tip

The best way to punch up the flavor of your turkey (especially if you're removing the skin) is to rub the meat directly with herbs or other seasonings—don't bother slathering your bird with butter or basting it with broth.



Vegan Stuffing Muffins

These stuffing muffins combine all the traditional flavors of Thanksgiving into one delicious, vegan muffin. If you're not vegan and you'd like the muffins to hold together even better, add one beaten egg to the mixture.



INGREDIENTS

2 cups cubed cornbread
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium yellow onion, chopped
1 teaspoon fresh sage leaves, torn
4 celery ribs, chopped
1 cup pecans, roughly chopped
1 cup dried unsweetened cherries
1/2 cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped
1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper
3/4 cup vegetable broth
1/4 cup dry white wine (or an additional 1/4 cup broth)

DIRECTIONS

SERVINGS: 12

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Toast the cornbread on a baking sheet for 10 minutes. Spray a 12-cup muffin pan with cooking spray and set aside. Remove cornbread from oven and set aside. Leave the oven on.
2. Place pecans on a baking sheet and roast for 6 minutes, until fragrant. Remove from oven.
3. In a large skillet, heat the oil for 1 minute over medium heat. Add the onion and sage and saute for 2 minutes. Add the celery, salt and pepper and cook for 5 minutes, until softened.
4. Transfer mixture to a large bowl. Add the toasted cornbread, pecans, cherries, parsley, salt and pepper, broth and wine. Combine with a spatula until all ingredients are wet, but still chunky. Scoop mixture into the prepared muffin pan and cook for 20 minutes, until golden on top.

Nutrient-Dense Ingredients

Pecans have more than 19 vitamins and minerals, plus healthy unsaturated fat that can lower "bad" cholesterol.

Cherries are an anti-inflammatory powerhouse. The antioxidants in cherries can reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease. Tart cherries help reduce pain from arthritis and post-exercise soreness and also help promote healthy sleep.

Orange-Ginger Cranberry Relish

Add a pop of color and flavor to your Thanksgiving table with this delicious and super easy cranberry relish. It comes together in less than 20 minutes and you can make it up to 4 days before serving! Talk about a time-saver.



INGREDIENTS

1 quart fresh cranberries, washed and picked through
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup water
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
Zest and juice of a medium orange
1-inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated

SERVINGS: 10

DIRECTIONS

1. Place all of the ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Stir and reduce heat to medium-low; simmer for 10 minutes, until the cranberries pop and the mixture thickens.
2. Transfer to a serving dish or to an airtight container and store in the refrigerator for up to four days. Add leftover relish to oatmeal and yogurt and stir into overnight oats.

Immune-Boosting Relish

While fresh cranberries may be among the most tart berries, they are excellent immune-booster.

They provide a good source of Vitamin C and have a unique ability to prevent certain bacteria from sticking to the lining of the urinary tract, which helps prevent urinary tract infections. This anti-microbial benefit is also why cranberries show promise in helping prevent cavities and periodontal disease.



Tahini-Maple Roasted Carrots

Switch up the usual mashed potatoes and sweet potato casserole and try these amazing roasted carrots! They go well with just about anything, including turkey.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 large bunch carrots, trimmed and lightly peeled
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon pure maple syrup

SERVINGS: 6

DIRECTIONS

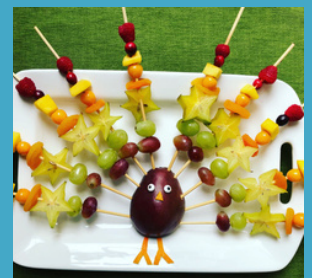
1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Using a chef's knife, cut carrots in half. Place carrots on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the olive oil, tahini, spices, salt and maple syrup.
3. Drizzle tahini mixture over the carrots and roast for 25-30 minutes, until tender.

FUN FOOD CRAFT Tessa the Turkey

Got kids at home?

Set up a fun turkey-building activity that doubles as a healthy snack. Grab your favorite colorful fruit and some wooden skewers and go!

Here is a photo of one I made with my kids last year using grapes, starfruit, dried apricots, cloud berries and raspberries, in addition to the pear in the center.



Roasted Pumpkin Seeds

Roasted pumpkin seeds make a delicious Autumn snack. You can nibble on them while you're preparing your Thanksgiving feast. And we think they go really well with cocktails!



INGREDIENTS

Seeds from a carving or pie pumpkin, cleaned very well (no stringy bits attached!)

Sea salt

Extra virgin olive oil

Seasoning(s) of your choice, like paprika, cayenne pepper, cinnamon, turmeric, etc.

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 300°F.
2. Boil the seeds in a large pot of salted water for 10 minutes. Drain and dry thoroughly with a clean kitchen towel. Transfer to a large bowl. Toss with enough olive oil to lightly coat (the amount of olive oil depends on the size of your pumpkin). Sprinkle in a teaspoon of salt and the seasoning(s) of your choice. Toss again.
3. Spread the seeds out in an even layer (no overlapping) on baking sheets. Bake for about 20-30 minutes, checking every 10 minutes to stir and make sure seeds aren't too brown. When just golden on the outside, remove, cool slightly and enjoy.

Healthy Day-of Snacking

Lots of people skip lunch on Thanksgiving because they want to "save up" calories, but that can lead to overeating later on. Prep a healthy snack tray to munch on in the afternoon. On a large board, put out lots of colorful veggies with hummus, nuts, cheese, beef or turkey jerky and other protein-rich snacks.



Vegan No-Bake Pumpkin Pie

I'm always looking to free up space in the oven on Thanksgiving and this no-bake recipe is a huge help! Make it a day in advance and you'll be all set. Plus, you can make all your guests happy because this recipe is vegan and gluten-free.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 ripe, but firm, avocado, pitted and peeled
- 1 cup pumpkin puree, chilled
- 3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 13.5-ounce can coconut milk, chilled
- 1 tablespoon powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon coconut butter (optional)
- 1 cup crushed gluten-free ginger snaps
- 4 dessert glasses or small jars

SERVINGS: 4

DIRECTIONS

1. Using a stand mixer or hand mixer, beat the avocado until creamy. Add in the pumpkin puree, vanilla extract, spice and sugar and beat until smooth. Transfer to a bowl and cover with plastic wrap (let it touch the top of the pumpkin mixture so a film doesn't form). Place in the refrigerator until ready to use.

2. Open the can of coconut milk and drain off as much of the water as possible. Place into the bowl of the stand mixer and beat on high for about 5 minutes, until thick. Add in the powdered sugar, vanilla and coconut butter and blend again for 1 minute. Cover with plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator until ready to use.

3. When ready to assemble, place 1/4 cup of the crushed ginger snaps into each of the dessert glasses or jars. Top with 1/4 cup, plus 1 tablespoon of the pumpkin mixture, followed by about 2 tablespoons of the coconut cream. Cover with plastic wrap (or place lids on jars) and transfer to the refrigerator for at least 2 hours or up to one day. The longer you leave them in the refrigerator, the softer the crumbs become. For added flavor, sprinkle a little extra pumpkin pie spice on top before serving.

The Best Breakfast Ever!

It's totally fine to have a slice of leftover pie (or my vegan no-bake version!) for breakfast, just add an extra dose of calcium and protein by eating with a side of yogurt.



Grocery Shopping List

MEAT

- _ 1 whole bone-in turkey breast, 6.5-7 pounds

PRODUCE

- _ 1 medium yellow onion
- _ 4 celery ribs
- _ 1 quart fresh cranberries
- _ 1 orange
- _ 1 avocado
- _ 1 whole pumpkin (for pumpkin seeds)
- _ 4 celery ribs
- _ 1 pound carrots

HERBS & SPICES

- _ Fresh rosemary
- _ Fresh sage
- _ Fresh thyme
- _ Fresh flat-leaf parsley
- _ Garlic
- _ Ginger root
- _ Ground cinnamon
- _ Ground turmeric
- _ Ground cumin
- _ Pumpkin pie spice
- _ Kosher salt
- _ Sea salt

GRAINS

- _ Cornbread (2 cups worth)

PANTRY

- _ Low sodium chicken broth (at least 2 cups)
- _ Olive oil
- _ Dried cherries, unsweetened
- _ Pecans
- _ Brown sugar
- _ Pumpkin puree
- _ Canned coconut milk
- _ Powdered sugar
- _ Coconut butter (optional)
- _ Gluten-free ginger snaps (enough for 1 cup)
- _ Vanilla extract
- _ Tahini
- _ Maple syrup

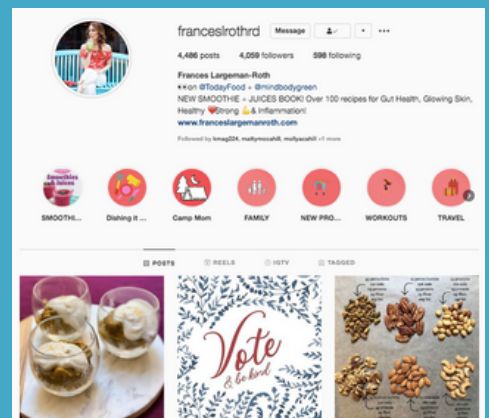
OTHER

- _ Dry white wine

More Healthy Holiday Inspo



For more healthy living tips for the holiday season (and every day!), follow me on Instagram at [@franceslrothrd.](https://www.instagram.com/franceslrothrd/)





Here's to peace and health this holiday season

This year has been tough for many of us. No matter how different your Turkey Day celebration might look this year, I hope the recipes in this guide bring comfort and nutrition to everyone at your table.

May you find peace and gratitude in all things this holiday season!

For healthy living inspo this holiday season, find me on Instagram @franceslrothrd.



About the Author

Frances Largeman-Roth, RDN, is a *New York Times* best selling author and nationally recognized nutrition expert. Frances is the author of *Feed the Belly: The Pregnant Mom's Healthy Eating Guide* and *Eating In Color: Delicious, Healthy Recipes for You and Your Family*. She is also the co-author of the bestselling *The CarbLovers Diet*. Her new book *Smoothies & Juices: Prevention Healing Kitchen* was published in September, 2020.

Frances is a freelance writer and recipe developer for numerous publications, including *Today.com*, *Parents*, *MindBodyGreen*, & *Parade*.

Frances and her family live in Westchester County, New York.