

## Thanksgiving turkey and pumpkins and wine, oh my!

A long-standing North American holiday, Thanksgiving can trace its American origins back to the early 1600's. Prior to 1621, the festival was generally held after the harvest to give "Thanks to God" for providing that autumn's bounty.

What we now consider to be "modern" Thanksgiving dates back 1621 in Plymouth, Massachusetts. It was here that the Pilgrims landed (late in 1620) and set up a colony. Without enough supplies from England, the first winter would have been disastrous for the Pilgrim colony, but intervention in the form of food supplies and foraging expertise from the local native population allowed the fledgling plantation to survive. As a result, after the harvest in the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims held a three day festival to give thanks to the natives that helped them survive the first winter. At the dinner, there were many of the foods associated with thanksgiving including wild turkeys that were common to the area. This celebration of two cultures became an annual tradition, and in 1941 the United States Congress passed the legislation that set Thanksgiving as a national holiday on its traditional last Thursday in November.

Although generally thought of as an American phenomenon, Thanksgiving is also widely celebrated here in Canada, although its origins are not as apparent as with the American festival. In Canada, much like in Europe Thanksgiving was a celebration held generally to coincide with harvests and special events of a religious nature. Oftentimes there were Thanksgiving events to celebrate the positive outcomes of events. For example, Martin Frobisher held a Thanksgiving event after his ship returned safely from an attempt at finding the Northwest Passage, unlike other explorers who did not return at all. By 1879, Thanksgiving was celebrated annually, but after the First World War, and the creation of Armistice Day on November 11<sup>th</sup>, the two observances began to collide. Eventually Thanksgiving moved to October, and in 1957 Canadian Parliament officially recognized the second Monday of October as Thanksgiving.

One of the key elements in the celebration of Thanksgiving is food...and lots of it. With that in mind here's a recipe that puts a spin on a traditional classic.

### German-Style Turkey

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 (18 pound) whole turkey, neck and giblets removed
- 1 medium onion, peeled
- 1 large carrot, peeled
- 1 stalk celery
- 1 apple, stem removed
- 1 orange
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) salt
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) coarsely ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) Cajun seasoning
- 1 pound (450 grams) sliced smoked bacon
- 1 turkey sized oven bag

#### **Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C).

Rinse the turkey, pat dry and place in a large roasting pan. Stuff the onion, carrot, and celery into the cavity of the bird. Poke holes in the apple and orange, and stuff them into the bird. If necessary, you may cut some things in half to get them all inside. Spread the oil all over the outside of the bird, and season with salt, pepper and Cajun seasoning.

Place the turkey into an oven bag, and set back into the pan with the breast facing up. Lay strips of bacon over the entire top. Close the bag. Roast the turkey for about 4 hours, or until the

internal temperature reaches 180°F (82°C) when taken in the thickest part of the thigh. Let the turkey rest for 10 or 15 minutes before carving, and use the drippings in your favorite gravy recipe.

With a recipe like this, there are a few different ways we can go when it comes to choosing wines. Traditionally, a Chardonnay (little or no oak) is a good bet, while a Viognier or Niersteiner will pair well also. For fans of red wine, a lighter bodied red like Beaujolais, Pinot Noir or Dolcetto should be a great pairing.

Although wine can take centre stage at many Thanksgiving gatherings, here's a Thanksgiving cocktail recipe that may steal the spotlight.

### **Pumpkin Pie Martini**

#### ***Ingredients:***

2 ounces Vanilla Vodka  
2 ounces Crème de Cacao  
1/4 cup (60 ml) heavy cream  
1.5 tablespoons (18 ml) of pumpkin puree (pie mix)  
1 dash of ground nutmeg (for garnish)  
Powdered graham cracker (for the rim)

#### ***Directions:***

Rim two martini glasses with crushed graham cracker. Fill a shaker with ice and add the vodka, crème de cacao, cream and pumpkin puree. Shake well until it's chilled. Strain into the martini glasses. Sprinkle the ground nutmeg on top for garnish.

#### ***Recommendations:***

Cupcake Chardonnay (USA) 750 ml \$15.29  
Clay Station Viognier (USA) 750 ml \$21.99  
Batasiolo Dolcetto d'Alba (Italy) 750 ml \$13.99  
Spy Valley Pinot Noir (New Zealand) 750 ml \$24.99  
Smirnoff Vanilla Twist Vodka (USA) 750 ml \$25.99  
Bols Crème de Cacao White (Netherlands) 750 ml \$23.49

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