



ALL
OF THE
TRIMMINGS
& NONE
OF THE
STRESS

Every family has its holiday traditions: turkey, stuffing, lumpy mashed potatoes the way Grandma used to make 'em. If you usually add "anxiety" or "resentment" to that list, you might want to pick up the phone and book a room at an inn or bed-and-breakfast. Forty percent of **innkeepers are now hosting homey Thanksgiving dinners**. That's right: No more hassles or headaches. These top-notch spots around the country will put the "thanks" back into your Thanksgiving. **BY KAREN CATCHPOLE**

IF YOU CRAVE... the lighter side

Lockeford, CA

CHECK IN The Inn at Locke House

Bed and Breakfast (19960 Elliot Road, theinnatlockehouse.com, 209-727-5715; doubles from \$385 for two nights, including Thanksgiving dinner for two) sits on 2 acres of gardens and orchards. When you leave your antique-filled room to roam the property, you'll spot ripening oranges, persimmons and grapefruit.

SIT NEXT TO exercise buffs and food and wine lovers (the Thanksgiving meal is made of low-fat versions of traditional favorites). One family regularly meets here for the holiday, with members flying in from Washington, Oregon and Maryland.

WALK IT OFF Walk? Nah. Give yourself a pat on the back for eating such a "light" menu on the biggest pig-out day of the year. Then drive around Lockeford, 100 miles east of San Francisco, and take in the sights—cattle and horse ranches, farms and vineyards. Visit the family-owned **Harmony Wynelands** (9291 E. Hamey Lane, Lodi, 209-369-4184; \$5 tasting fee, waived with purchase) and sip some riesling on the patio. If sweets are more your thing, take a self-guided tour of the nearby **Chocoholics Divine Desserts** (18819 E. Hwy. 88, Clements, 209-759-3340). Watch how treats are made and packed at the factory, then satisfy your cravings at the store. Shock yourself out of the sugar coma with a little skydiving: For \$100, you'll be strapped to a professional before free-falling for 2 miles (parachutecenter.com, 209-369-1128).



Cranberry-Mango-Citrus Relish

MAKES ABOUT 5 CUPS **PREP** 15 MIN (PLUS COOLING) **COOK** 15 MIN

- 3 cups fresh cranberries
- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons grated peel plus ¼ cup juice of 1 orange
- 2 teaspoons grated peel plus ¼ cup juice of 1 lemon
- 1 large mango, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1 small red onion, chopped (¾ cup)
- 2 teaspoons grated peel plus juice of 1 lime
- ½ teaspoon hot pepper sauce

1. In a heavy, medium skillet, cook the cranberries, brown sugar, granulated sugar, orange juice and lemon juice over medium heat, stirring, until the mixture begins to thicken and the cranberries start to split, about 10 minutes. Lower the heat, add the mango, red onion, lime juice and hot sauce and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 3 to 5 minutes. Let cool for 1 hour.
2. Stir the citrus peels into the relish.

The Inn at Locke House Menu

- Leek soup with parmesan thins
- Beet salad with goat cheese and orange vinaigrette
- Slow-roasted herb turkey with root vegetables and roasted vegetable gravy
- Mushroom-sausage stuffing
- Cranberry-mango-citrus relish**
- Cider-glazed ham with stone-ground mustard
- Chunky applesauce
- Green beans in ginger butter
- Sweet-potato soufflé
- Whipped potatoes with light cream cheese and light sour cream
- Dessert:
- low-sugar pumpkin pie with gingersnap streusel topping, light lemon cupcakes, apple pie with vanilla bean ice cream

Book a B&B if you and your partner want a romantic getaway.





BlissWood Menu

Sweet-potato bisque

Roast turkey

Roasted suckling wild boar

Chorizo-and-cornbread stuffing

Hot and spicy cranberry sauce

Spring mix salad with pumpkin seeds and dried cranberries

Green beans almandine

Sweet sautéed carrots

Dessert:

pumpkin pie with praline topping, pecan pie, apple crisp and vanilla ice cream, white chocolate bread pudding, chocolate chip cookies

Book a B&B if...

you want menu ideas for next year.

IF YOU CRAVE... the simple life

Cat Spring, TX

CHECK IN BlissWood Bed-Breakfast & Spa (13300 Lehmann Legacy Lane, blisswood.net, 713-301-3235); doubles from \$159, Thanksgiving dinner \$27 for adults, \$11 for children under 10), a 650-acre working cattle ranch, is the inn that technology forgot. When you cuddle up in your quilted bed, you likely won't reach for the remote—there's no TV or telephone in all but two cabins—but you can book an in-room massage. Heck, even cowboys get stress knots.

SIT NEXT TO businessmen, doctors and lawyers, mostly from nearby Houston. All are there to step back to a simpler time, when folks amused themselves by sitting on the porch swing, admiring the wildlife—like white-tailed deer—before stuffing their bellies. Owner Carol Davis serves Thanksgiving dinner at **Carol's at Cat Spring**, the cowboy-chic leather-walled restaurant she runs just a few minutes down the road.

WALK IT OFF Ride a horse, go fishing, take a hike or ride in a hot air balloon—all right on the premises. On Thanksgiving Day, Carol hosts a turkey shoot; the winner gets a turkey. You'll shoot a real gun at turkey-shaped targets, and yes, it's legal. Welcome to Texas!



Chorizo-and-Cornbread Stuffing

SERVES 8 PREP 35 MIN BAKE 30 MIN

- 1 stick (4 ounces) butter
 - 1 sweet onion, finely chopped (1 cup)
 - 1 green bell pepper, finely chopped
 - 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- Salt and pepper
- 12 ounces cured chorizo sausage, coarsely chopped, or raw chorizo sausage, cooked and crumbled
 - 3 to 4 granny smith apples, finely chopped (4 cups)
 - 1 cup pecans, coarsely chopped
 - ½ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
 - 6 cups coarsely chopped store-bought cornbread (about 1 pound)
 - 1 cup chicken broth

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Add the onion, bell pepper and garlic and cook until slightly softened, 8 to 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Add the chorizo and cook for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and add the apples, half of the pecans and the parsley; season with salt and pepper.
2. In a large bowl, gently mix the chorizo mixture with the cornbread. Transfer to a buttered 9-by-12-inch baking dish, pressing lightly into place. Pour the chicken broth evenly over the mixture. Press the remaining pecans on top.
3. Bake the stuffing until lightly browned, about 30 minutes.

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- Summer Nites Menu**
- Paprika-rubbed roast turkey
 - Apple-chestnut stuffing
 - Brown-sugar-glazed ham with pineapple**
 - Classic mashed potatoes
 - Sweet potato-pecan soufflé
 - Buttered corn with red pepper
 - Creamed onions
 - Green bean casserole
 - Dessert:**
 - pumpkin pie, pecan pie
 - apple crisp and vanilla ice cream

IF YOU CRAVE...
a nostalgic trip
North Wildwood, NJ

CHECK IN Pick your favorite decade at **Summer Nites** (2110 Atlantic Ave., summernites.com, 609-846-1955; from \$105, including Thanksgiving dinner for two), where you can stay in the Elvis suite, the Marilyn room or suites that highlight the '50s, '60s or '70s. The scene couldn't be further from Rockwell's picture-perfect image of the holiday, but for some, that's a good thing.

SIT NEXT TO young couples and Coast Guard recruits from the local base. Owner Sheila Brown and her husband, Rick, join roughly 20 guests for a retro Thanksgiving buffet in their classic diner, complete with booths, neon lighting and a 1953 jukebox.

WALK IT OFF Dive deeper into bygone eras in Wildwood, loaded with more '50s and '60s motels than anywhere else in the United States (dooowopusa.org). Go back even further in time in nearby Cape May, lined with beautiful Victorian homes, antique stores and timeless beaches.



Brown-Sugar-Glazed Ham with Pineapple

SERVES 8 **PREP 10 MIN** **COOK 2 HR**

- One 7½- to 9-pound fully cooked ham**
- ½ cup brown sugar
 - ½ cup maple syrup
 - 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
 - 4 canned pineapple rings, thinly sliced

1. Preheat the oven to 275°. Place the ham facedown in a roasting pan. Cover tightly with

foil and bake for 1½ hours.

2. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, combine the brown sugar, maple syrup and mustard and bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Cook until reduced slightly, about 2 minutes; set aside.

3. Brush the baked ham with the glaze, then top with the pineapple rings, securing them with toothpicks. Return the ham to the oven and bake uncovered until heated through, 25 to 30 minutes.



Book a B&B if...
you want to get
out of cooking and
doing the dishes.

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IF YOU CRAVE... a little bit of luxury

Townsend, TN

CHECK IN Redefine "cabin fever" at **Dancing Bear Lodge** (137 Apple Valley Way, dancingbearlodge.com, 800-369-0111; doubles \$260. Thanksgiving dinner \$45 for adults, \$75 with wine pairings, \$25 for children under 12). Once you sink into your ridiculously soft feather bed, you won't want to leave. And you probably won't have to. The incredibly attentive staff bends over backward for guests—even after they've left the exposed-pine lodge walls. When one guest forgot her purse, a staffer drove it to the airport himself.

SIT NEXT TO outdoorsy families—many including three generations—and couples who can afford to spend the dough. A two-hour five-course meal is served in the dining room, under soaring ceilings. After the whiskey cake is served, you'll assemble s'mores around an outdoor stone fireplace.

WALK IT OFF You can mountain-bike or fly-fish right at the lodge, and explorers can drive 4 miles to the stunning **Great Smoky Mountains National Park**. The Dancing Bear staff will even pack you a picnic lunch of Thanksgiving leftovers.



Dancing Bear Lodge Menu

Butternut squash and apple soup

with spiced crème fraîche

Warm duck salad with pears,

cranberries and walnuts

Smoked free-range turkey

with herb butter

Sorghum-glazed Virginia ham

Buttermilk mashed potatoes

Cornbread-and-andouille stuffing

Creamy green beans with shiitake

mushrooms and crispy shallots

Jack Daniel's cranberry relish

Local cheese course

with butternut squash jam,

maple-walnut bread and

honey-rosemary pistachios

Dessert:

Tennessee whiskey cake with

candied pecans, pumpkin crème

brûlée with cinnamon toast



Tennessee Whiskey Cake

MAKES ONE 10-INCH CAKE

PREP 30 MIN BAKE 35 MIN

- 1 stick (4 ounces) unsalted butter, softened
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1/4 cup Tennessee whiskey, such as Jack Daniel's

Vanilla ice cream, for serving

Chocolate sauce, for serving

Candied Pecans (see below), for serving,
optional

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. In a bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and baking soda.

2. Using a standing mixer, beat the butter at medium-high speed until creamy; gradually add the brown and granulated sugars and mix well. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well and scraping down the sides of the bowl after each addition. On low speed, beat in the flour mixture, one-third at a time, alternating with the milk and ending with the dry ingredients. Mix in the molasses on medium-low speed. Mix in the whiskey until smooth, about 30 seconds.

3. Pour the batter into a greased, parchment-paper-lined 10-inch cake pan and bake for 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool.

4. Serve the cake with vanilla ice cream, chocolate sauce and candied pecans, if using.



For the Candied Pecans recipe, visit
rachelraymag.com/november.



IF YOU CRAVE...
nature's splendor
Hereford, AZ

CHECK IN Kick back on the patio at the Spanish-style **Casa de San Pedro** (8933 S. Yell Lane, bedandbirds.com, 888-257-2050; doubles \$160, Thanksgiving dinner \$30 per person), and take in the view of the Huachuca Mountains.

SIT NEXT TO plenty of nature lovers from around the world—the inn is a 10-acre world-class bird-watching base that boasts 350-plus bird species, including bald and golden eagles.

WALK IT OFF Take an easy hike in the cottonwoods along the San Pedro River. Those craving a little civilization can tour former mining boomtown Bisbee, which is full of early-1900s historic homes (home tour \$15 for adults, \$5 for children, November 28 and 29; discoverbisbee.com).



Casa de San Pedro Menu

Champagne with cheese, crackers, fruit and nuts

Spinach salad with poppy seed dressing

Turkey three ways: oven-roasted, barbecued, smoked

Pork tenderloin with sauerkraut, apple and caraway seeds

Whipped potatoes

Baked yams with orange, pecans and coconut

Sweet-potato casserole

Southwestern mushroom casserole

String beans with red pepper

Whole wheat herb stuffing

Singer-cranberry sauce

Yeast rolls

Pies:

pumpkin, pecan, five-apple with cheddar, Mexican squash and chocolate ganache



Southwestern Mushroom Casserole

SERVES 6 PREP 15 MIN COOK 45 MIN

Two 8-ounce packages sliced mushrooms

¼ cup beef broth

1 tablespoon flour

½ cup heavy cream

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Salt

½ cup breadcrumbs

½ cup grated parmesan cheese

2 tablespoons butter, cut into pieces

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. Place the mushrooms in a 2-quart pie pan. In a medium bowl, combine the beef broth and flour; microwave at low power until slightly thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the heavy cream and cayenne; season with salt. Immediately pour the sauce over the mushrooms.
2. In a medium bowl, mix together the breadcrumbs and parmesan. Sprinkle on top of the mushrooms, top with the butter and bake until browned, about 45 minutes.