

Return the pan to medium-high heat. Add the sausage and cook, stirring and crumbling with a wooden spoon, until lightly browned and cooked through, about 10 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to the bowl with the focaccia stuffing. Add the parsley to the bowl and stir to combine. Stir in 3 cups of the stock. The dressing should be moist but not soggy. Add more stock if needed and season with salt and pepper.

Transfer the dressing to the prepared casserole dish, cover with a piece of buttered aluminum foil and bake for 20 minutes. Remove the foil and continue baking until the top is golden and crispy, 15 to 20 minutes more. Serves 10 to 12.

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## Chocolate-Pecan Tart

*We put a new twist on classic pecan pie, baking it in the shape of a tart and enriching the dessert with bittersweet chocolate. Crunchy pecans evoke the autumn harvest, and chocolate adds another layer of flavor. To speed preparation, this recipe incorporates our ready-to-use filling, hand made in Texas at The Great Saba River Pecan Company, known for its award-winning pecan products.*

Divide the puff pastry in half. Roll out each piece into a 16-by-6-inch rectangle. Fit each piece into a 14-by-4-inch tart pan. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until cold, about 1 hour.

Position a rack in the lower third of an oven and preheat to 400°F.

Line the tart shells with parchment paper or aluminum foil and fill with pie weights. Bake the tart shells until the edges begin to brown, about 15 minutes. Carefully remove the parchment and weights and continue baking until the centers are golden, 7 to 10 minutes more. Transfer the pans to a wire rack and let the tart shells cool completely, about 30 minutes. Brush the shells with the beaten egg. Reduce the oven temperature to 325°F.

Remove the lid from the pecan pie filling jar. Place the jar in a large heatproof bowl and pour enough boiling water into the bowl to come three-fourths of the way up the sides of the jar. Let stand for 15 minutes.

Carefully pour the filling into another large bowl, add the lightly beaten eggs and stir until well combined. Stir in the chocolate. Divide the filling between the tart shells. Bake until the filling is puffed and just set, 15 to 20 minutes.

Transfer the pans to the wire rack and let the tarts cool completely, about 2 hours, before serving. The tarts can easily be made a day in advance: Remove the tarts from the pans and let cool completely. Then return them to the pans (to help them keep their shape), wrap with aluminum foil and store at room temperature. To serve, cut the tarts into slices and accompany with a dollop of whipped cream. Serves 10 to 12.

Williams-Sonoma Kitchen

November 21, 2010

## Thanksgiving Planning Checklist

As a first step, make a planning checklist to help you stay organized:

- Decide which meals you will be hosting.
- Determine a guest list for each meal.
- Choose an entertaining style (casual or formal).
- Set a time for serving the meal.
- Choose a serving style (buffet, family or restaurant style).
- Pick a color palette.
- Select, borrow or rent tableware and serveware.
- Decide on the seating arrangement, table centerpiece and other decorations.
- Plan an achievable menu that fits all of the choices you have made.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma *Thanksgiving Entertaining*, by Lou Seibert Pappas (Free Press, 2005).

## Ingredients for Spatchcocked Turkey, Roasted with Lemon, Sage & Garlic

6 garlic cloves

Zest of 1 lemon, removed in ½-inch-wide strips

10 large fresh sage leaves, coarsely chopped

1 Tbs. fresh thyme leaves

1 tsp. kosher or sea salt, plus more, to taste

1 tsp. freshly ground pepper, plus more, to taste

16 Tbs. (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature, cut into chunks

1 fresh or thawed frozen turkey, 10 to 14 lb., removed from the refrigerator 1 hour before roasting

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# Technique Class: A Time-Saving Thanksgiving

Whether you are having a crowd for dinner or hosting a few people over the long weekend, the secrets to Thanksgiving entertaining are organization and planning. The more you can do ahead, the more relaxed you will be when your guests arrive, and your calm, happy mood will set the tone. In that spirit, here are some recipes that will save time, helping you bring together all the elements you need to turn a meal into a celebration.

## Spatchcocked Turkey, Roasted with Lemon, Sage & Garlic

Spatchcock, *an old culinary term of Irish origin, is an abbreviation of “dispatch cock,” a phrase used to describe preparing a bird by splitting it down the back, spreading it open like a book and pressing it flat for easy, faster roasting. The term butterflied refers to the same type of preparation.*

*Keep in mind that this turkey will not look like a Norman Rockwell image of a perfectly roasted turkey presented on a platter. It is meant to be carved in the kitchen. The turkey is spread open and roasted flat to speed up the cooking time. Once carved and presented on an elegant platter, you won't be able to tell the difference between a spatchcocked turkey and one you have roasted whole. This method is brilliant for the Thanksgiving cook with little time to prepare and cook, because a 10- to 14-lb. turkey will roast in an hour and a half. Butterflying the turkey is not difficult, especially if you have poultry shears or a sharp chef's knife.*

Position a rack on the second-lowest level in the oven and preheat to 350°F. Have ready a roasting pan large enough to accommodate the turkey when laid flat after spatchcocking (butterflying).

In a food processor fitted with the metal blade, combine the garlic, lemon zest, sage, thyme, the 1 tsp. salt and the 1 tsp. pepper. Process until finely minced. Add the butter and process until well combined.

Place the turkey, still in its original wrappings, in a clean sink. Carefully slit open the plastic wrapper and remove the turkey. Remove the neck and bag of giblets from both the main cavity and the neck cavity of the bird. If desired, store them in a covered container in the refrigerator to use when making the gravy. Remove the plastic or metal clip holding the legs together. Pull and discard any fat pockets from the neck and main cavities of the bird. Trim off the tail, if desired, and store along with the neck and giblets for stock. Rinse the turkey and pat dry thoroughly.

To butterfly the turkey, place it, breast side down, on a cutting board. Using poultry shears or a chef's knife, cut through the turkey from one end to the other on each

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#### Ingredients for Creamy Mashed Potatoes in the Pressure Cooker

About 2½ lb. large russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 2-inch chunks

½ tsp. salt, plus more, to taste

½ cup heavy cream

2 Tbs. unsalted butter

side of the backbone to remove it. Cut the backbone in half and refrigerate it for making stock for gravy. Turn the turkey breast side up, pull the body open, and use the heel of your hand to press down firmly, cracking the rib bones so the turkey lies flat. This takes a little pressure and strength; you might need to make a partial cut through the breastbone to get the turkey to lie flat.

Using your fingers and being careful not to tear the skin, loosen the skin from the breast of the turkey to create a pocket. Smear the lemon-herb butter all over the breast meat under the skin with your fingers, pushing some butter over the thigh and leg meat. Rub the skin of the turkey all over with any remaining flavored butter, and season on all sides with salt and pepper. Transfer to the roasting pan, laying the turkey out flat, skin side up. Roast for about 1½ hours, depending on the size of the bird, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the thigh, away from the bone, registers 160° to 165°F.

Transfer the turkey to a carving board and cover loosely with aluminum foil. Let rest for 20 minutes before carving to allow the juices to redistribute. (The internal temperature will rise 5° to 10° degrees while the turkey rests.) Carve the turkey and serve. Serves 8 to 12, depending on the size of the turkey.

Adapted from *The New Thanksgiving Table*, by Diane Morgan (Chronicle Books, 2008).

## Creamy Mashed Potatoes in the Pressure Cooker

*Mashed potatoes are most often left to the last minute and can take some time to prepare; but they're so easy and fast to make in the pressure cooker, you'll want to serve them much more often. You can vary the flavor every time you make them by using different additions or substitutions.*

In the pressure cooker pot, combine the potatoes, 6 cups water and the ½ tsp. salt. Lock the lid into place and cook on high pressure for 5 minutes according to the manufacturer's instructions. Quick-release the steam. When the pressure valve drops, remove the lid, tilting it away from your face to allow residual steam to escape.

Drain the potatoes in a colander and let them stand in the sink for 1 minute or so to evaporate any excess water. Put the cream and butter into the pressure cooker pot and warm over medium-high heat (or the sauté function on an electric cooker); when the cream bubbles at the edges, pour the potatoes back into the pot. Turn off the heat. With a potato masher or heavy whisk, mash and stir the potatoes until smooth and thick. Season with salt and serve immediately. Serves 6.

#### Variations:

**Horseradish Mashed Potatoes:** Stir in 2 Tbs. cream-style horseradish.

**Sour Cream Mashed Potatoes:** Melt the butter in the pot but don't add the cream; return the potatoes to the pot and mash lightly, then beat in ½ cup room-temperature sour cream.

**Buttermilk Mashed Potatoes:** Substitute ½ cup buttermilk for the heavy cream.

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**Irish-Style Potatoes:** Thinly slice 3 green onions (both green and white parts) and sauté in the pot with the butter before adding the cream.

**Cheddar Mashed Potatoes:** Stir in 1 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese after mashing the potatoes.

Adapted from *The Pressure Cooker Cookbook*, by Tori Ritchie (Weldon Owen, Inc., 2010).

## Butternut Squash Soup

*This warming soup is a snap to prepare when you use our butternut squash puree. An immersion blender makes fast work of pureeing the soup.*

In a stockpot over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil. Add the pancetta and cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly crisp, 5 to 7 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the pancetta to a paper towel-lined plate; reserve the oil in the pot.

Add the onion and sugar to the pot and cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is tender and slightly caramelized, 8 to 10 minutes. Add the garlic and sage sprig and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the broth and squash puree and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes. Remove the sage sprig and discard. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for a few minutes to combine the flavors. Add the Marsala and season with salt and white pepper. Simmer for 3 minutes, then remove the pot from the heat.

Using an immersion blender, puree the soup until smooth, then whisk in the cream. Ladle the soup into warmed bowls. Garnish with the pancetta, a dollop of whipped cream and hazelnuts. Serves 6.

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## Sausage, Chestnut and Fennel Dressing

*To streamline preparation, this recipe calls for our focaccia stuffing mix, made by the renowned La Brea Bakery, in Southern California. Here, the seasoned croutons are combined with fennel, sausage and other ingredients to create a flavorful stuffing.*

*When selecting fennel, look for smooth, tightly layered bulbs. Prepare the fennel by removing the stems and feathery leaves, then cutting the bulb lengthwise. Gently separate the layers and rinse them well.*

Preheat an oven to 375°F. Butter a 3½- to 4-quart casserole dish.

Put the focaccia stuffing in a large bowl. Set aside.

In a large sauté pan over medium-high heat, melt the butter. Add the onions, celery and fennel and sauté, stirring occasionally, until soft and translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the wine and cook, stirring to scrape up the browned bits, until most of the liquid has evaporated, about 3 minutes. Add the chestnuts and cook, stirring frequently, for 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the onion mixture to the bowl with the focaccia stuffing.

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#### Ingredients for Butternut Squash Soup

1 Tbs. olive oil

5 oz. pancetta, cut into small dice

1 yellow onion, chopped

1 tsp. sugar

1 tsp. minced garlic

1 sprig fresh sage leaves

¾ cups low-sodium chicken broth

1 jar (32 oz.) butternut squash puree

1½ Tbs. Marsala wine

Salt and freshly ground white pepper, to taste

¼ cup heavy cream

Lightly whipped cream for garnish

¼ cup hazelnuts, toasted and chopped

#### Ingredients for Sausage, Chestnut and Fennel Dressing

1 box (16 oz.) focaccia stuffing

4 Tbs. (½ stick) unsalted butter

2 yellow onions, diced

4 celery stalks, diced

1 large fennel bulb, trimmed and diced

½ cup white wine

2 cups prepared French chestnuts, roughly chopped

Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

1¼ lb. mild Italian sausage, casings removed

6 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

3 to 3½ cups chicken stock, warmed, plus more as needed