

Join Me in the Kitchen & Around the Table for a Cooking Class!

Enjoy delicious food & fun!

Italian Country Kitchen

Tapas & Finger Food

French Bistro Cooking

French Country Cooking

Moroccan Feast

Latinas Night Out!

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Cooking Couples
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Private Chef & Catering
Celebrations for Family & Friends.
...too busy or too tired to cook ...
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*Cook like a chef or
just look like one!*
Treat Yourself to an
Around the Table
Chef's Apron

Contact Susan Nye at
susannye@tds.net
or 603/526 7319

More information the web at
www.susannye.com

Thanksgiving is all about family and food, and maybe a little football. More than any other holiday, dinner is the main act. There is nothing else to distract us, no jolly guy in a red suit, no fancy disguises or bunny rabbits. The table positively groans with fabulous dishes we only make once a year.

If you are hosting Thanksgiving this year, no need to panic. All you need is a good plan and maybe a little help. At least one or two friendly volunteers will probably pop up. Whether they offer to run an errand, bring dessert or carve the bird, don't hesitate, accept!

For this feast of feasts, I offer you some of my tried and true recipes, foolproof timeline and my mantra, "it's a marathon, not a sprint."

The Menu

You may have your own favorites. If not, I offer some of mine. You can find these recipes on my website at www.susannye.com.

Roasted Butternut Squash Soup (October 2008)

Roast Turkey with My Mom's Stuffing (stay tuned – it's up next week)

Cranberry Sauce (today!)

Roasted Green Beans & Tomatoes (December 2009)

Decadent Thanksgiving Potatoes (November 2009)

Mixed Greens with Roasted Mushrooms, Gorgonzola & Toasted Walnuts (September 2010)

Old-Fashioned Apple Crisp with Cranberry Coulis & Ice Cream (September 2010)

2009-2010 recipes are on my website's Recipes page. Older recipes are in the Archives. Recipes are organized by original publication date to help you find them quickly and easily. If all else fails, Google ... susan nye apple crisp ... or whichever recipe you need. It should pop up.

And now for the Countdown

Before it's too late:

I order my fresh turkey a week to ten days before Thanksgiving.

Saturday morning before Thanksgiving:

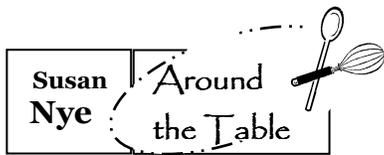
I grab a mug of tea (coffee if I'm feeling particularly groggy), take a deep breath and get ready to make some final, yes final, decisions. I review my menu and cast it in stone. I pull out my recipes and make my shopping list. Even if I have made the dish hundreds of times, I check the recipe to make sure I don't forget anything. As I build my list, I check my cupboards. The last thing I need is to discover I'm out of cinnamon on Thursday morning. I also check expiration dates. If the sell-by date is May 1994, it's probably time to buy a new jar! Then it's off to the supermarket and farm stand for the first round of shopping.

Sunday:

If I don't already have a batch in the freezer, I roast and puree the vegetables for the butternut squash soup (steps 1-3). I cool and store the puree in the freezer until Thursday morning.

Monday:

I find a half hour to make the Cranberry Sauce, Cranberry Coulis for the Apple Crisp and the Vinaigrette for the salad. Each takes about ten minutes. I like getting these tasks out of the way and the sauces into the refrigerator so I don't have to worry about them. (Or, in the confusion, forget them.) It's incredibly satisfying to check three things off my to-do list so early in the week!



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Tuesday:

I set and decorate the table and pull out my serving dishes. Yes, I have one of those silly gravy boats shaped like a turkey ... and pumpkin salt shakers. I throw together a quick and easy centerpiece of gourds and a few ears of Indian corn, add some candles and my table is picture perfect.

Wednesday:

It's Thanksgiving Eve and I move into high gear. I clear my calendar and devote the day to cooking. First I check and double check my lists and head to the store. I pick up my fresh turkey, greens, beans and anything I forgot on Saturday.

Home again, I make My Mother's Stuffing and store it in the refrigerator. Next, I prepare the Decadent Thanksgiving Potatoes. A cross between smashed and scallop potatoes, they are not only delicious, they can be prepared in advance and baked at the last minute. It's great to have one more thing out of the way and safely stored in the refrigerator.

Next, I roast mushrooms, crumble gorgonzola, prep onions and chop and toast walnuts for the salad. If I have time and no one has offered, I prep everything for the Roasted Green Beans and Tomatoes. Since there are walnuts on the salad, I don't bother on the beans.

Turkey Day:

First thing in the morning, I make the Apple Crisp. With sweet and spicy apples bubbling in the oven, the house begins to smell like Thanksgiving.

Before I forget, I remove the squash puree from the freezer and put it in a large soup pot to thaw. Then I take a walk. We have our feast in the late afternoon so I have plenty of time.

About a half hour before it's time to shove the turkey into the oven, I stuff, tie and truss the bird. (Not forgetting to remove the neck and bag of giblets from the turkey's cavity.)

While the turkey roasts, the house fills with delicious aromas and ravenous family and friends. I hold court in the kitchen and make broth for the gravy with the turkey neck and giblets. As we get closer to T-time, I roast the Green Beans and Tomatoes and bake the Decadent Thanksgiving Potatoes. To ensure no one faints from hunger, I finish the Roasted Butternut Squash Soup and serve it in mugs. Some of us stand around the kitchen while we sip our soup while others relax in front of the fire.

When the turkey has finished roasting, I let it rest for about thirty minutes. About this point, chaos starts to ensue. There are usually at least ten extra people in the kitchen. Unless they offer to help, I do my best to ignore them while I keep an eye on the vegetables and make the gravy. A few deep breaths help a lot.

Somehow or other the well-rested turkey gets carved, the salad is tossed and everything ends up in a serving dish and on the table. Following my Nana Nye's example, before sitting down, I put the apple crisp back into the oven which is off but still warm.

Finally, thankfully, we are all around the table. We raise our glasses in a toast to health, happiness, friends and family.

Bon appétit and Happy Thanksgiving!



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Cranberry Sauce

My grandfather lived on Cape Cod after he retired. He did a lot of odd jobs to keep himself busy, including harvesting cranberries in the fall. Enjoy!

Makes about 2 cups

12 ounces of fresh cranberries

1 cup sugar

1/4 teaspoon salt

1 cup orange juice

2 tablespoons Grand Marnier

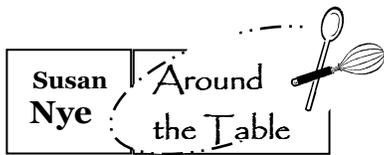
Grated peel of 1 orange

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 teaspoon ginger

Combine all the ingredients in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Transfer to a small bowl and let cool. Cover and refrigerate.

Turn the page for my Thanksgiving Checklist ...



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My Thanksgiving Checklist

Saturday:

	Finalize the menu
	Get organized: make up shopping and to-do lists
	First shop

Sunday:

	Make and freeze puree for the Roasted Butternut Squash Soup
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Monday:

	Make Cranberry Sauce
	Make Cranberry Coulis for Apple Crisp
	Make Vinaigrette

Tuesday:

	Set and decorate the table
	Organize serving dishes

Wednesday:

	Final shop
	Make stuffing
	Prepare potatoes
	Prepare mushrooms, gorgonzola and walnuts for the salad
	Prep green beans, tomatoes and onions

Turkey Day:

	Make and bake the Apple Crisp
	Take a walk
	Finish the soup
	Stuff, roast and carve the turkey
	Make the giblet broth and gravy
	Roast the green beans
	Bake the potatoes
	Toss the salad
	Take a deep breath or two
	Juggle everything into serving dishes and onto the table
	Turn off the oven and put the apple crisp into the oven to warm
	Relax and enjoy!