



Black Friday & Curried Thai Soup with Noodles, Turkey & Vegetables

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The Friday after Thanksgiving marks the start of the holiday shopping season. Sometime in the 1960's it was christened "Black Friday". Some say the name refers to the heavy traffic on the roads and chaos in the stores. Others contend the name refers to the day when retailers turn the profitability corner to end the year in the black.

Without question it is a dangerous day to go shopping. The big stores open their doors at 5 a.m. touting huge, super-fantastic sales. Mobs of shoppers

with long lists jam the aisles and too-loud holiday muzak fills the airwaves. Jostled by crowds, assaulted by noise and confusion, shopping on Black Friday is part obstacle course, part endurance race.

I must confess I avoid the stores on Black Friday. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy Christmas shopping. I just question the wisdom of venturing out into the fray while nursing a tryptophan hangover. Black Friday aside, it's fun to hunt down the perfect something or other for everyone on your list.

I think that I was five when I made my first venture downtown to do my own Christmas shopping. Then again, I might have been six. Before leaving the house I carefully counted out my nickels, pennies and dimes. The grand total was all of one dollar, more or less. With my precious change jingling in my pocket, my dad took me to Woolworths. Now we have Walmart and dollar stores, then we had Woolworths. It was the store of choice for budget conscious shoppers with only a dollar to stretch.

My collection of coins had to cover my entire family. Both sets of grandparents, my great Aunt Bess, my dad and sister. My brother was born a few years later and Mom's handmade gift was coming from art class. Every year our teachers came up with creative ideas for one or both of our parents. Our class photo and some combination of Popsicle sticks, glitter and plaster of Paris was generally involved.

Dad stayed a discreet distant away while I wandered the aisles. The store was a bit daunting with its too bright florescent lights and too many aisles packed with potential presents. Still I managed to find a lace handkerchief, a pin cushion and a tiny bottle of eau de cologne for my grandmothers and aunt. My sister was easy, jacks or a bag of marbles, I can't remember which. At a loss, I called Dad over for help with the grandfathers. A pen and a note pad went into my basket before I shooed him away and headed to the tool aisle.

Even as a kid I loved tools and gadgets so I figured Dad must too. From a shiny screwdriver when my budget was slim to a fancy juicer when it wasn't, Dad has received more than his fair share of whiz-bang tools and terrific gadgets. At least I think they're terrific.

When you are five, there is something quite wonderful about gift giving. It was a thrill to watch my family open their oh so carefully chosen presents on Christmas morning. At least for a minute or two, it was even better than the Ginny doll or maybe it was Betsy Wetsy waiting for me under the tree.

A lot has changed since I was five. Woolworths went out of business a long time ago and a dollar can no longer buy gifts for an entire family. But then again, maybe very little has changed. After all, the joy of giving never gets old. I hope that you can stay away from the traffic jams, malls and crazy crowds this Black Friday. Spend the day enjoying the gift of time with family and friends.

Bon appétit!



Curried Thai Soup with Noodles, Turkey & Vegetables
After a traditional New England Thanksgiving dinner I like to spice up the leftovers. More soupy noodles, than noodle soup, this one packs a punch! Enjoy!
 Serves 4

Vegetable oil
 1 large onion, chopped
 4 carrots, chopped
 4 celery stalks, chopped
 4 cloves garlic, minced
 1-inch piece ginger, minced
 1 teaspoon or to taste Thai red curry paste
 4 cups turkey (or chicken) stock – homemade (recipe follows) or store bought
 1 cup unsweetened coconut milk
 1 tablespoon fish sauce
 1 tablespoon soy sauce
 2-3 sprigs fresh thyme or 1/4 teaspoon dried
 1 bay leaf
 2 cups cooked turkey in bite size pieces
 About 4 ounces vermicelli rice noodles
 About 8 ounces baby spinach, roughly chopped

Put a little oil in a large casserole. Add the vegetables, garlic, ginger and curry paste and cook over medium heat for about 10 minutes.

Increase the heat to medium high. Add the stock, coconut milk, fish sauce, soy, thyme and bay and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer until vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Stir in the turkey and simmer 5 minutes more.

Increase the heat to medium-high, add the noodles and cook for 1-2 minutes, stirring and poking the noodles down into the hot broth to cook evenly. A handful or two at a time, stir in the spinach and cook until it starts to wilt. Remove the pot from the heat, cover and let sit for 2-3 minutes. Ladle into bowls and serve.

If you have any roasted butternut squash left over from Thanksgiving, add it to the soup along with the turkey.

You can make the soup ahead. Before adding the noodles and spinach, cool the soup to room temperature and then refrigerate covered. This recipe also works well with chicken.



Another recipe from Susan Nye: Fall 2011/Volume 271

Turkey Stock

- 1 turkey carcass
- 1 large onion, quartered
- 2 carrots, cut into large chunks
- 2 celery stalks, cut into large chunks
- 6-8 quarts water – enough to cover the turkey and vegetables
- 1 bay leaf
- 3-4 sprigs fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Put the turkey, vegetables, water, bay leaf, thyme, salt and pepper and in a large soup pot. Bring to a boil over medium high heat. Skim the foam as it collects on the surface. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer for 2 - 2 1/2 hours.

Remove the turkey bones and vegetables from the pot and discard. Strain the stock through a sieve or colander lined with cheesecloth. For a richer stock transfer the strained broth to a clean soup kettle, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer until it has reduced by 1/4 or up to 1/2. Cool, skim any excess fat and refrigerate or freeze until ready to use.

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