



## **THE BIG EASY ... AN EMPTY NESTERS THANKSGIVING**

**At Mamas' Nest – Nancy Franich, Judy O'Brien, Lizabeth Yee  
and Janet Benson (in Eat-aly)**

**Starters:** A Sip of Butternut Soup  
Honey Drizzled Apricots with Basil, Goat Cheese & Almonds

**First Course:** Bibb, Basil & Mint Salad with Parmesan Butter Crostini

**Main Course:** Mediterranean Harvest Turkey Breast  
Farrotto Rustichella d'Abruzzo with Porcini  
Full Moon Squash Flowers  
O'Brien Cranberry Apricot Compote – A Family Favorite

**Dessert:** Applesauce Cake with Turkey-a-la-Candy Corn





## Butternut Squash Soup

Saute the following in a 4 qt stock pot about 15 minutes:

5 T butter  
2 1/2 # butternut squash, peeled, seeded & cut into 1/2 " cubes  
2 cups leeks, chopped (white and light green parts only)  
1/2 cup carrots, peeled and chopped  
1/2 cup onions, chopped  
1/2 tsp salt

Add the following and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook for 30 minutes or until squash is tender.

2 small Granny Smith apples, peeled and chopped  
1 1/2 tsp thyme  
1/4 tsp nutmeg  
1 T ginger, minced  
1/8 tsp cayenne  
5 cups chicken stock  
1 cup apple cider (not vinegar)

Puree the soup with immersion blender or processor.

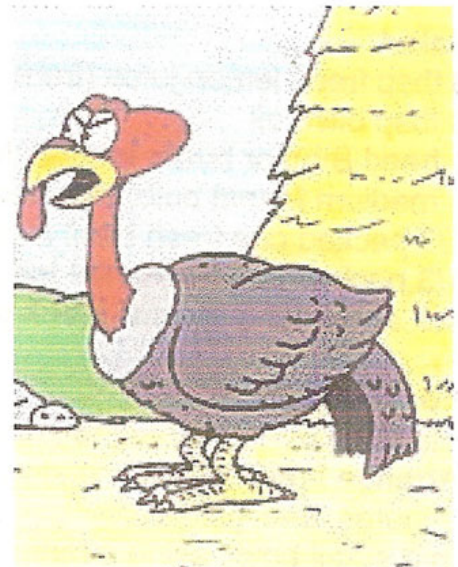
Freezes well.

## Apricots with Basil-goat Cheese and Almonds

4 oz fresh goat cheese such as Laura Chenel, at room temperature  
About 2tsp milk  
2tbsp finely chopped fresh basil  
40 dried apricots, preferably Blenheim  
40 almonds, preferably Marcona or Marchini  
2 tsp honey.

1. Mix together cheese 2 tsp milk and basil with a wooden spoon until spreadable. Thin with more milk if necessary
2. Spread a heaping 1/4 tsp cheese on each apricot and top each with an almond. Drizzle with honey.

Makes 40 hors d'oeuvres



## Cranberry Apricot Compote

- 6 oz. dried apricots
- 2 12oz bags fresh cranberries
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar (I use less)
- 3 large shallots

Quarter apricots and pick over cranberries. In a 3 qt. saucepan bring water to a boil and simmer until

sugar is dissolved, about 5 minutes. Add cranberries and simmer until cranberries have burst, about 5

more minutes. Finely chop 3 large shallots and stir into above. Remove pan from heat, cool completely.

Compote may be made ahead and chilled for 2 days. Makes 4 cups



"I know one thing about pilgrims. Their mothers picked out their clothes."

## Bibb, Basil and Mint Salad with Parmesan Butter Crostini (4 to 6 servings)

### Crostini

- ½ baguette loaf, cut into ½ inch thick slices
- ¼ cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1/3 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese

### Salad

- 3 tbsp fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 head Bibb or butter lettuce, leaves torn
- 1 medium fennel bulb, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 1/3 packed cup fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1/3 packed cup fresh mint leaves, chopped
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

### For the crostini:

Place an oven rack in the lower third of the oven and preheat the oven to 375\* F. Arrange bread slices in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, until golden.

In a small bowl, using a fork, mix the butter and cheese together until smooth.

### For the salad:

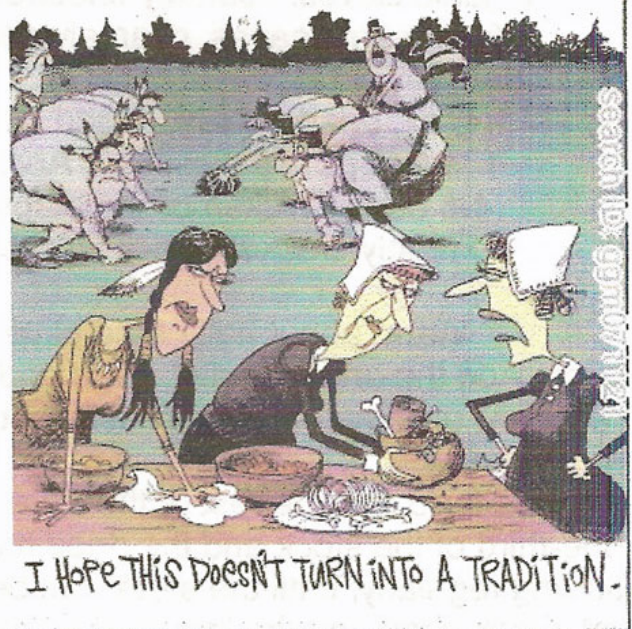
In a salad bowl, whisk together the lemon juice and oil until smooth. Season with salt and pepper. Add the lettuce, fennel, basil, and mint. Toss well.

Spread the parmesan butter on the crostini and serve alongside the salad.



## Mediterranean Turkey Breast

4 pound boneless turkey breast  
2 tsp salt  
½ tsp pepper  
3 cloves fresh garlic, minced  
½ cup olive oil  
½ cup white wine vinegar  
2 medium tomatoes chopped  
¼ cup chopped parsley  
1 can (2 ¼ oz) sliced ripe olives  
(don't drain!)



Rinse turkey breast, drain and pat dry. Mix salt, pepper and garlic to a paste; rub onto turkey breast. Place turkey breast in large, heavy-duty plastic bag securely and refrigerate several hours or overnight, turning occasionally.

Remove turkey breast from plastic bag, reserving marinade; place on rack in foil-lined roasting pan. Insert meat thermometer into thickest part of turkey breast. Pour reserved marinade over turkey breast allowing vegetables to settle into the bottom of roasting pan.

Roast in 325 degree oven 2 – 2 ½ hours, or until meat thermometer registers 180 degrees, basting frequently with marinade liquid. Remove from oven, allow to stand 20 minutes before carving. Serve cooked marinade from roasting pan as sauce for turkey.

Makes 6-8 servings.



## Farrotto with Dried Porcini

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling

1/4 cup diced yellow onion

3 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped

3 fresh sage leaves, coarsely chopped

Salt

1/4 oz. dried porcini, rinsed and coarsely chopped

1 1/2 cups Rustichella d'Abruzzo whole farro

4-5 cups Chicken or Vegetable stock

Freshly cracked Black Pepper

Warm about half of the olive oil in a 2-4 quart saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, sage and a few pinches of salt. Cook, stirring regularly, until the onion is translucent, about 4 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium-low.

Add the farro and the rest of the olive oil and stir to coat the farro. Add about one-third of the stock and the dried mushrooms and cook at gentle simmer, stirring regularly, until the stock has been absorbed. Repeat with another third of the stock, then add the last third more gradually, checking for tenderness as each addition is absorbed; Taste and adjust the salt as you go. It should take between 20-30 minutes for the farro to become nutty-tender.

Serve very hot, drizzle with extra virgin olive oil. Offer black pepper

Serves 4-6

Recipe adapted from the Zuni Cafe Cookbook

## Squash "Flowers"

Pattypan squash or any summer squash cut in half.  
(you may need to cut the bottom a bit on a pattypan to make it sit flat)

butter or olive oil

parmesan cheese

paprika

parsley

Parboil or steam squash until a fork goes into it easily.

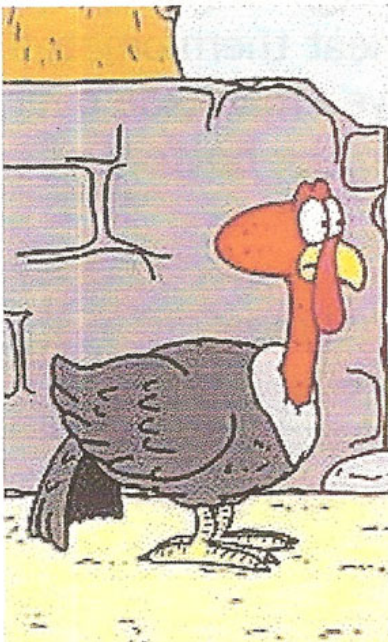
Place squash on a foil covered cookie sheet.

Brush squash with melter butter or olive oil.

Sprinkle squash with parmesan cheese and your choice of spice and greenery

Broil until cheese bubbles.

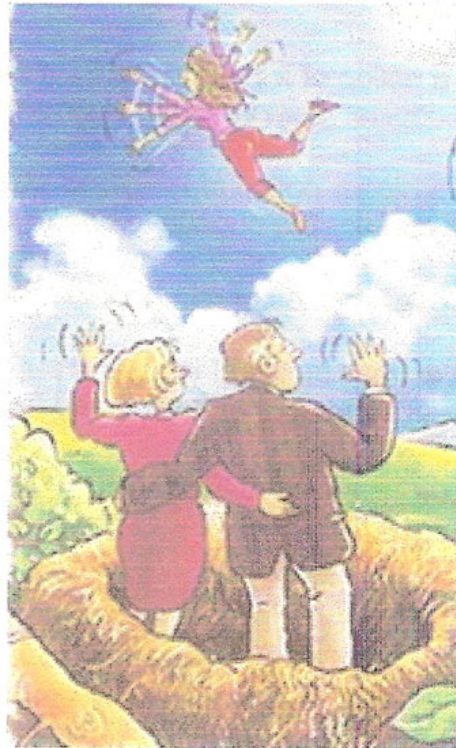
Can be garnished with additional parsley sprigs.



## Applesauce Cake

3/4 cup butter, room temp  
2 cups sugar  
3 eggs  
3 cups all purpose flour  
1 1/2 tsp soda  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp cinnamon  
1/2 tsp ground cloves  
1/4 tsp nutmeg  
1 1/2 cups applesauce  
1 cup raisins  
1 cup walnuts or pecans, toasted & chopped

Beat butter until fluffy  
Add sugar, beat 5 minutes  
Add eggs, beat 1 minute  
Sift together dry ingredients and add to mix  
Add applesauce, beat at low speed until blended  
Stir in nuts & raisins  
Pour into a greased & floured 12 cup bundt pan  
Bake @ 350 for 1 hour  
Cool on rack before removing from pan  
To serve sprinkle with powdered sugar





## Turkey Favors

### What you need

- \* Large round cookies for the base, sugar cookies or oatmeal cookies - they need to be a good size.
- \* Oreo cookies (optional to white fillings - orange fillings available at Halloween or red fillings available at Christmas)
- \* Candy corn (alternatively use harvest corn)
- \* Chocolate covered cherries (Lady Anne ones pop up at Walgreen's and CVS this time of year and are in both dark and milk chocolate)
- \* Can white icing (Betty Crocker is what I use)

### Directions

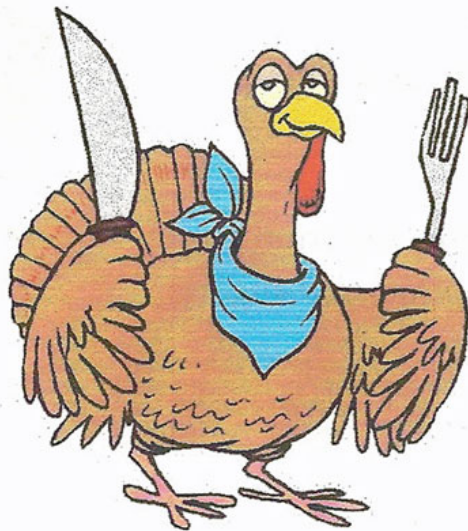
Take a dollop of icing and put it on the flat back of the cherry, and then place the cherry on the Oreo cookie. Bottom of the cherry should be at the rim and against the edge of the Oreo cookie.

Take a bigger dollop of icing and smear in the center of the base cookie and then place the Oreo in the center - the chocolate and the edge of the Oreo are anchored in the icing.

Shove two pieces of candy corn into the icing, under the chocolate, pointed end in, like feet.

Take a small dollop of icing and put it on top of the chocolate and then use that to anchor in a piece of candy corn, pointed end facing out.

Finished – you've got a Turkey







Apricots with Basil, Goat Cheese and Almonds



Butternut Soup



Bibb, Basil & Mint Salad with Parmesan Butter Crostini



Mediterranean Harvest Turkey Breast  
Farrotto Rustichella d'Abruzzo with Porcini  
Squash Flowers  
Cranberry Apricot Compote



Applesauce Cake with Turkey a la Candy Corn