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CopyKat Does Thanksgiving

You don't need to go out to a restaurant to have a tasty meal. You don't need to spend a lot of money on a prepared meal from your favorite place to eat; you can make a meal at home for much less with a CopyKat Thanksgiving. Before you sit down to enjoy your Thanksgiving meal with your friends and family, consider a small donation to your local food pantry. Here are our suggestions for your Thanksgiving meal.

Appetizers

How can you start a meal without appetizers? Personally, I don't think it is possible, so let's get started feeding your guests some nice nibbles, that you can prepare ahead of time.

This is perfect to make for this holiday; you are going to be doing some cooking, so you are likely to have many fresh vegetables around. You can also make this dish a day ahead of time so you can just pull these out of your refrigerator and serve.

Veggie Patch Pizza



Yield: 48 servings

2 cans Pillsbury Crescent rolls
2 8 ounce packages of cream cheese
1 package Hidden Valley Ranch Dressing Mix, or about 2 tablespoons of dry mix (this is sold in bulk at Sam's Club)
1 tablespoon dehydrated onions
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1/2 red bell pepper chopped fine
1/2 cup chopped fresh broccoli
1/2 yellow bell pepper chopped fine
1 large carrot chopped fine
1/2 cup chopped tomato (optional)
1/2 cup chopped yellow squash (optional)
1/2 cup chopped zucchini (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a large cookie sheet with non-stick spray. Lay out crescent rolls on cookie sheet. Simply unroll the dough, do not separate it out into triangles. Press indentations of the flat. Bake for about 12 – 15 minutes, or until golden brown. Allow cooked dough to chill before proceeding. In a medium sized bowl combine cream cheese, mayonnaise, dry ranch dressing mix, and dehydrated onion together in a bowl. Spread cream cheese mixture over cooked crescent roll dough. Top with veggies sprinkling the veggies evenly over the pizza. Cut immediately,

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even if you aren't going to serve this immediately. If you wait on cutting this for too long, the cream cheese layer will lift off the dough. Your Veggie Patch Pizza can be made a day in advance, but make sure you cut it before you cover to store the Veggie Patch Pizza.

Houston's Artichoke Spinach Dip

You can prepare this up to 2 or 3 days before the day you want to serve this and simply heat on Thanksgiving Day.

- 1 (6.25 oz) Jar Marinated Artichokes (drained)
- 1 (10 oz.) Package Frozen Chopped Spinach (thawed and drained very well)
- 1/2 tsp. Minced Garlic
- 1/3 C. Freshly Grated Romano Cheese
- 1/4 C. Freshly Grated Parmesan Cheese
- 1 C. Shredded Mozzarella Cheese
- 1/3 C. Cream or Half and Half
- 1/2 C. Sour Cream

In food processor blend artichokes, Romano cheese, garlic and parmesan cheese for about 1 – 1 1/2 minutes. Artichokes and cheeses should be minced, but should not be pasty.

In a mixing bowl add drained spinach, cream, sour cream, and mozzarella, stir well. Spoon into mixing bowl mixture from food processor. Blend all ingredients. Mixture should have a medium thick consistency. Spray an oven proof shallow serving dish. Pour artichoke mixture into baking dish and bake for 20 – 25 minutes at 350 degrees.

Artichoke dip should be a little bubbly and cheese melted through. Remove from oven

and serve with your favorite heated tortilla chips, sour cream and salsa and enjoy.

Side Dishes

So you have let your guests enjoy your appetizers. For Thanksgiving we don't stray too far from the traditional side dishes.

Boston Market Corn Bread

The first time I brought this to a family Thanksgiving this was inhaled.

- 1 box Jiffy Mix Cornbread Mix
- 1 box Jiffy Mix Yellow Cake Mix
or
- 2 boxes Jiffy Mix Cornbread Mix
- 1 box regular yellow cake mix

Mix both boxes according to directions, and combine the batter. I generally use a large mix bowl, and add both boxes together, and add the other ingredients all at once. If you have only boxes of jiffy mix, use a brownie sized baking pan, 8 x 8, if you are going to use a box of regular cake mix, use a 9 x 13 inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees until done, this takes about 30 minutes, test for doneness.

Cracker Barrel Green Beans

Maybe you want something other than the traditional green bean casserole, you can prepare these, and reheat just before serving, I have made these, and reheated in the oven and they taste even better because the bacon flavor really enhances those green beans.

1/4 lb. Sliced Bacon
3 Cans Whole Green Beans (14.1/2 oz do not drain liquid)
1/4 of a medium sized Onion 1 tsp. Sugar
1/2 tsp. Salt
1/2 tsp. Fresh Ground Pepper

In a two quart sauce pan on medium heat, cook bacon until lightly brown but not crisp. When bacon has browned add green beans. Add salt, sugar, pepper, and mix well. Place onion on top of green beans, cover with a lid and bring to a light boil. Turn heat down to low and simmer beans for 45 minutes. Cooking the green beans for 45 minutes on a very low simmer will blend the flavors. I must say we love a variety of vegetables at every meal, but green beans can be on my plate several times a week.

You can find many more copycat [Cracker Barrel recipes](#) here at CopyKat.com

Piccadilly Carrot Soufflé

2 lb. carrots (about 8 med-large) peeled, and cut into chunks
1 cup sugar
1-1/2 tsp. baking powder
1-1/2 tsp. vanilla
1/3 cup flour
4 eggs
1/2 cup butter, melted

Cook the carrots until tender; drain and mash. In large mixing bowl, combine mashed carrots, sugar, baking powder, vanilla and flour. Beat for 3 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Continue to beat, slowly adding melted butter. Pour mixture into a greased 1-1/2 quart baking dish or 9" square pan. Bake at 325F about an hour, or until set in the centre. Note: if your oven runs hot, reduce the temperature a bit to avoid scorching the bottom. To serve, lightly dust the top with powdered sugar.

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Saltgrass Steakhouse Garlic Mashed Potatoes

5 Medium Russet Potatoes (wash and scrub potatoes, the peelings are left on)
2 Tbsp. Butter (softened for rubbing on unbaked potatoes)
1/2 – 3/4 C. Milk
1/2 tsp. Salt
3 Tbs. Butter
1/2 tsp. Ground Fresh Black Pepper
1 Whole Garlic Head (measure out 1 1/2 tsp of crushed garlic after the roasting process)
1 1/2 tsp. Olive Oil

After washing potatoes, rub potatoes with softened butter and place in a 375 degrees oven until potato is soft, when checked with a fork. The potatoes should take about a 1 – 1 1/4 hour. To prepare garlic cut the top of the head of garlic off so you can see garlic cloves without any peelings covering them. Spoon the vegetable oil on top of garlic and wrap in foil. Place in oven while baking the potatoes. Garlic will take about 1/2 – 3/4 hour. Garlic should be soft and golden in color when finished baking. When garlic is removed from the oven cool slightly and squeeze soft garlic from head.

Depending on the size of the cloves it should take about 4 – 5 cloves. The crushed garlic should measure out to be 1 1/2 tsp. More garlic may be added for the hearty. When potatoes are done chop slightly and place in a large mixing bowl. Add salt, butter, pepper, and roasted garlic that have been mashed and measured. Add 1/2 cup milk. Beat with an electric mixer until fluffy. There will be little chunks of potatoes that will not be completely mashed. The small lumps and peelings will give these potatoes

a hearty flavor.

Sweet Potato Casserole

This is my Grandmother's recipe; I will double and triple the topping on the sweet potato casserole.



Yield: 8 servings.

4 C. mashed sweet potatoes
1 C. white sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
4 large eggs
1 stick melted butter
1/3 C. milk
1 C. coconut (optional)

Topping

1/2 C. firmly packed brown sugar
1/4 C. flour
1 C. chopped pecans
2 1/2 Tbsp. butter

Beat casserole ingredients in mixer until well blended. Put into a 2-qt. long casserole dish that has been well greased with butter. Mix and spread topping ingredients over the sweet potato mixture. Bake in 350 degrees oven for 55 minutes.

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Desserts

How can you have a Thanksgiving without an array of desserts? These 3 recipes are my top picks.

Olive Garden Pumpkin Cheesecake



This luscious cheesecake combines the two classic favorites, a New York Style Cheesecake and pumpkin pie. The flavors of the pumpkin pie are complimented by a ginger snap cookie crumb crust, sweet whipped cream, caramel sauce, and a sprinkle of crumbled ginger bread cookies. Yield: 10 – 12 slices.

Crust

Use an 8-inch spring-form pan
1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
1 cup ginger snap cookies
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon [cinnamon](#)
8 tablespoons melted butter

Cheesecake Filling

3 8-ounce packages cream cheese
1 15-ounce can pure pumpkin
2/3 cups light brown sugar
3 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves

Sour Cream Layer

1 cup sour cream
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/8 teaspoon cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg **freshly ground if available

Whipped Cream

2 pints heavy cream
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Additional toppings:
Caramel sauce
gingersnap crumbs

Crust preparation

In a medium sized bowl combine graham cracker crumbs, ginger snap crumbs, sugar, and butter, mix well. Press crust into a spring form pan. Press the crust about halfway up the side of the spring form pan. Refrigerate crust while you continue to prepare the cheesecake.

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Filling preparation

Allow extra time for mixing up this filling. Remove the pure pumpkin puree from the can and place into a couple of large paper towels. Wrap the pumpkin puree with the paper towels; this will soak the excess water in the pumpkin puree. Continue to remove excess water from the pumpkin puree for about 60 minutes before making cheesecake mixture. Bring the remaining ingredients for the filling to room temperature while the pumpkin puree is having the water removed. With a mixer beat cream cheese until smooth, and add eggs one at a time, and then combine all ingredients for the filling in a mixer. Blend until very smooth. For best results allow all ingredients to reach room temperature before mixing the filling. Remove crust from refrigerator, and pour in filling.

Bake cheesecake at 350 for 30 minutes, and then reduce temperature to 325 degrees for an additional 30 minutes. When you remove the cheesecake it should be slightly jiggly in the center, the cheesecake will set up nicely as it cools.

Sour Cream Layer

When you remove the cheesecake from the oven set aside, and begin to prepare the seasoned cream cheese layer. In a small bowl combine sour cream, sugar, and spices. Blend well. Spread seasoned sour cream mixture over the baked cheesecake evenly. Place the cheesecake back into the 325 degree oven for about 8 minutes to the sour cream layer will set.

Whipped Cream

Now allow the cheesecake to cool, when the cheesecake is completely cool, you can add the whipped cream. In a medium sized bowl combine 2 pints heavy whipping cream, vanilla, and sugar, mixes well with a blender or a stand mixer. Whip the cream until it forms stiff peaks. Remove ring from the spring-form pan, and either pipe the whipped cream over the pumpkin cheesecake or spread with a knife.

When you are ready to serve the Olive Garden Pumpkin Cheesecake cut each slice, drizzle the top of the cheesecake with caramel sauce, and then sprinkle over gingersnap crumbs before serving.

Additional notes about cheesecake making: I personally do not use a water bath. I do have a clay baking stone in my oven, and my cheesecakes come out very well. You may wish to use a water bath when you prepare your cheesecake.

Also, I would really urge you to try to let your ingredients reach room temperature before blending together the filling. This really makes a difference in getting a nice and smooth filling.

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Luby's Pecan Pie

Pecan pie is one of the easiest pies to make, if you can measure, and mix, you can make a delicious pecan pie that everyone will wonder how you made such a fantastic dessert. Don't tell anyone that it took you a few minutes to put this pie together.

Betty Crocker:



Yield: 8 servings.

- 1 9 inch unbaked pie shell
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup pecans

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Melt butter, and set aside. In a medium sized bowl combine corn syrup, sugar, 3 eggs, melted butter, vanilla, and salt. Combine to mix well. The mixture should be smooth before you pour the mixture into the pie shell. Place one cup of pecans into the pie shell. The pecans will float to the top as the pie cooks. Bake for approximately an hour, or until the center is set.

You can serve this pie with whipped cream if you desire.

Recipe adapted from Houston Chronicle Recipe.

Pumpkin Pie on Steroids

Haven't tried this one? This is so good. You could make this one gluten free by using a gluten free cake mix. So, so tasty.

- 1 Large can of pumpkin (29oz)
- 1 large can of evaporated milk(soup can size)
- 1 Cup of sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp [cinnamon](#)
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 box of yellow cake mix
- 1 bag of crushed pecans
- 3/4 cup butter melted

Mix pumpkin, milk, eggs, sugar, cinnamon, vanilla until blended. Pour in 9x13 dish. Sprinkle dry cake mix over pumpkin. Sprinkle pecans over dry cake mix. Pour butter evenly over pecans. Bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes and ENJOY!!!!

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Want more resources? Check out these food related sites. This list came from the EAT-L recipe exchange list.

Pillsbury:

<http://www.pillsbury.com/>

Kraft Foods:

<http://www.kraftfoods.com/kf/Pages/home.aspx>

King Arthur Flour:

<http://www.kingarthurfour.com/>

Bob's Red Mill (many gluten-free, etc.):

<http://www.bobsredmill.com/>

Clabber Girl:

<http://www.clabbergirl.com/>

Quaker Oats:

<http://www.quakeroats.com/home.aspx>

McCann's Irish Oats:

<http://www.mccanns.ie/>

Domino Sugar:

<http://www.dominosugar.com/>

The Spice House (wonderful - I use them a lot):

<http://www.thespicehouse.com/>

McCormick:

<http://www.mccormick.com/>

Nestle main USA site & their Very Best Baking site:

<http://www.nestleusa.com/>

Baker's Chocolate:

<http://brands.kraftfoods.com/bakerschocolate>

Ghirardelli chocolate:

<http://www.ghirardelli.com/>

Hershey's

<http://www.hersheys.com/>

Diamond Nuts:

<http://www.diamondnuts.com/>

Planter's Nuts:

<http://www.planters.com/>

Emerald Nuts:

<http://www.emeraldnuts.com/>

Karo Syrup:

<http://www.karosyrup.com/>

King Syrup:

<http://www.carriagehousebrands.com/king-syrup.html>

Steen's pure cane syrup:

<http://www.steensyrup.com/>