ISSUE **BROWN BAG** APPLE PIE PUMPKIN-CREAM CHEESE PIE P. 77 CHEESECAKE WITH TEQUILA CAJETA P. 100 RUTH REICHL'S ORANGE SOUFFLÉ RECIPES FOR COFFEE CAKE YOUR HOLIDAY TABLE P. 48 AND BEYOND **NOVEMBER 2024**









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The Thanksgiving Issue

FEATURES

5 Foolproof, Fail-Safe **Thanksgiving Recipes**

Our smart, streamlined recipes are the key to a stress-free Turkey Day-and they also offer lessons that will make you a better cook all year long. From the creamiest make-ahead mashed potatoes to a tender, no-shrink piecrust, we've got you covered. By Ann Taylor Pittman

78 Ode to the Onion

The humble onion takes center stage in crunchy, crispy onion rings; delicate red onion and smoked trout sandwiches; and creamy onion soup. Plus, learn how to add a beefy, savory, French-onion flair to any recipe. By Cheryl Slocum

90 **Fellow Spirits**

Día de Muertos-Day of the Dead-offers opportunities for families to gather and reconnect with those who have passed on through well-loved recipes, such as a cajeta-draped cheesecake, mole negro, pan de muerto, and more. By Sam Gutierrez

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8 Buttery pull-apart garlic knots, tender brisket with savory melted onions, Manhattans topped with toasted marshmallows, a silky cheesecake paired with tequila-infused caramel sauce, and much more

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15 A grandmother's secret to apple pie, an innovative indoor smoker, and a sumptuous baked goat cheese from 2007 F&W Best New Chef Gavin Kaysen

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31 Carla Hall's ciderglazed ham proves Thanksgiving isn't all about turkey, plus the best side and dessert recipes from our holiday archives, each from a culinary legend.

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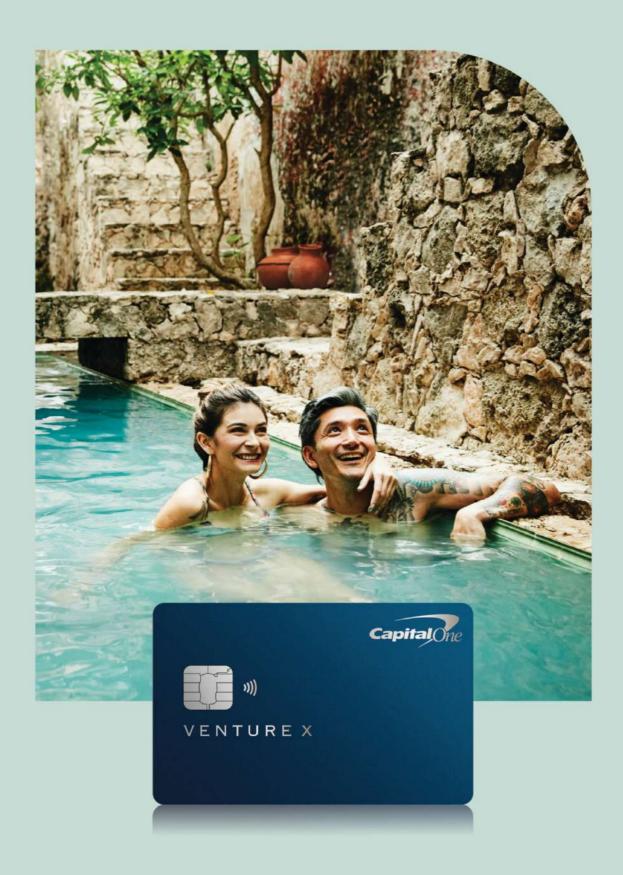
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104 A retro celery-andolive tray transforms into a punchy and crisp salad in the hands of Food & Wine Test Kitchen alum Marcia Kiesel.

Baked russets are the key to the creamiest makeahead mashed potatoes (recipe p. 73).

PSON; FOOD STYLING: MARGARET MONROE DICKEY; PROP STYLING: AUDREY DAVIS PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRIS SIN





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KEY:

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POULTRY, BEEF & PORK

Brisket with Melted Onions **P. 88**

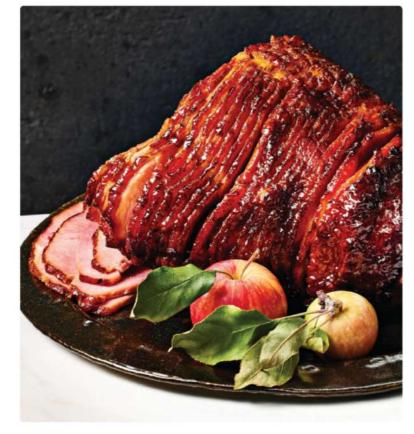
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What Ray's Pouring Now Executive Wine Editor Ray Isle's favorite things to drink this month



2022 M. CHAPOUTIER BELLERUCHE CÔTES DU RHÔNE BLANC (\$19)

I took time during my tastings for an upcoming red Rhône column—coming in 2025—to taste the latest vintage of this white from the iconic Michel Chapoutier. With its orchard-fruitand-honeysuckle character, it's a great holiday-season pour.

GRAY WHALE GIN (\$40)

When I'm land-bound in Brooklyn rather than by the water somewhere, I've found my urban restlessness is handily mellowed by a martini made with this coastal, small-batch California gin. It is juniper-driven and has graceful notes from sea kelp and other botanicals; plus, 1% of all sales go to environmental causes.

2023 ALPHONSE MELLOT LA MOUSSIÈRE SANCERRE (\$56)

I had this elegant white one stunning evening at Aragosta restaurant in Maine as summer was turning into fall. Full of citrus and mineral flavors, it was an ideal match for chef Devin Finigan's brilliant hyperlocal cooking, but it would be equally brilliant with any shellfish you can think of.

LLUSTRATION: ANN MARTIN FOLEY





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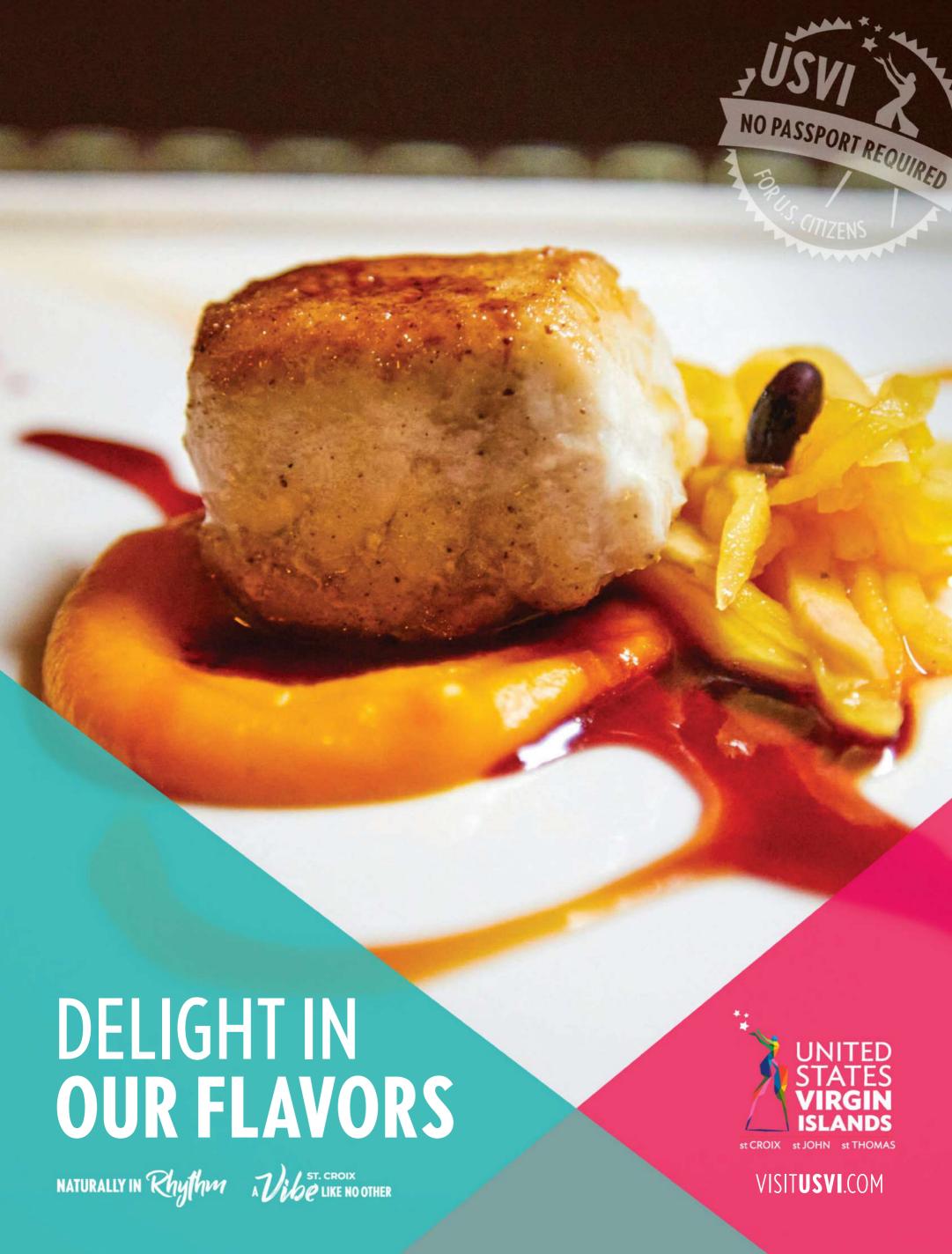
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A Ritual of Fruit

A FRUIT PLATTER is a lot like a sandwich: It tastes better when someone else assembles one for you. That's because they both convey care. I couldn't help but think about this on a recent reporting trip in Toronto, where I ate my weight in mangoes, peaches, mangosteens, lychees, and citrus, including a gorgeous arrangement on the kind of vintage glass salad plate our editors have been seeing all over the world lately. This particular dessert reminded me of my late grandmother Margaret Erichson, aka Mom Pat, who loved peak-season fruit as much as I do and used to serve hers on those same plates—plates she later handed down to me.

Like so many women of my mom's and grandmother's generation, Mom Pat didn't have a chef's knife. She preferred to use a paring knife to cut everything, slicing each piece of fruit over a bowl, her knowing hands curved around the knife's small handle. She worked with an apron tied around her waist and the sleeves of her starched white blouse rolled up to the elbow. She always had sludge-thick cowboy coffee warming in the coffeepot in her Asheville, North Carolina, kitchen, and she adorned her breakfast table-especially during the holidays-with bacon, coffee cake, and plates of orange and grapefruit slices, each juicy slice carefully segmented to remove any trace of bitterness.

Nostalgia creeps in this time of year. How can it not when you're gathering with multiple generations of family or carrying on the traditions of those who are no longer at the table? We're leaning into that feeling in this issue of *Food & Wine*. There's the simple-yet-miraculous brown-bag apple pie that senior prop stylist Claire Spollen learned from her grandmother (recipe p. 18). There's Carla Hall, channeling memories of her grandmother's glazed ham in the spiced cider-glazed beauty on p. 33. And there are the salsa-basted entomatadas (recipe p. 100) that 2023 F&W Best New Chef Edgar Rico makes in memory of his grandmother for Día de Muertos, Mexico's Day



of the Dead, when families honor their deceased loved ones and make their favorite meals (see story on p. 90).

We also pay tribute to the ace cooks who have tested and perfected thousands of recipes in the F&W Test Kitchen since 1978. Former F&W Deputy Food Editor Kate Heddings shares former Test Kitchen Supervisor Marcia Kiesel's punchy, olive-studded celery salad, as well as memories of the hundreds of turkeys cooked by our team over the years just for you. We've also dipped into the archives to share an all-star roster of Thanksgiving sides, from Anthony Bourdain's candied sweet potatoes to Martha Stewart's fruit-and-nut stuffing, starting on p. 36. You'll also find five smart, streamlined recipes for your Turkey Day essentials from Ann Taylor Pittman, one of the most talented recipe developers I've ever worked with. Her story, "5 Foolproof, Fail-Safe Thanksgiving Recipes," is just that—and each recipe bakes in clever make-ahead tricks and tips that you can use in your cooking all year round.

From our team here at *Food & Wine* to you, Happy Thanksgiving, fellow cooks. What are the recipes that you hold most dear? I'd love to hear about them.

Hunter

HUNTER LEWIS
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How to Segment Citrus

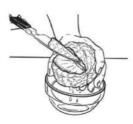
Use a sharp paring knife like Opinel's (\$12) or a small serrated knife like the Sabre Tomato Knife (\$22) to turn a whole orange or grapefruit into delicate and perfect "supremes," and be sure to squeeze the juices from the spent shell of the fruit into the bowl when you finish the job. My grandmother did all of her knife work over a bowl; here's how I've adapted her technique in my kitchen.



Arrange citrus on a cutting board with both poles facing out. Cut off a 1/4- to 1/2-inch slice from each end.



Stand citrus up on one cut side; trim off the peel and white pith to expose the flesh, turning the fruit as you go.



Slice between the white membranes to free the segments, dropping the supremed citrus into a bowl.



Squeeze the juices from the "carcass" of the fruit into the bowl, making sure to capture and discard any stray seeds. Store fruit in juice in refrigerator for up to 3 days.

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FOOD STYLING: JULIAN HENSARLING; PROP STYLING: CLAIRE SPOLLEN

OBSESSIONS



It's the Little Things These pocket-size kitchen items make perfect host gifts—guaranteed to spark a smile.



1. KIKKERLAND FISH GARLIC PRESS

l've always found garlic presses difficult to clean and store, but this fish-shaped one is an exception. It's not only adorable, but it also doesn't take up a lot of space in my kitchen, and it's extremely easy to wash—a quality every home cook will appreciate. (\$15, kikkerland.com) –DOAN NGUYEN, PHOTO EDITOR

2. ALESSI DRESSED EGG CUP WITH SPOON

While no one *needs* an egg cup per se, it does give the experience of eating a soft-boiled egg an enjoyable sense of ceremony. This refined model from Italian homeware company Alessi comes with a small stainless steel spoon. (\$50, us.alessi.com)

-AMELIA SCHWARTZ, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

3. IHOSHIRO KILN VEGETABLE SERIES A MINO WARE CHOPSTICK RESTS

These Japanese ceramic chopstick rests shaped like vegetables bring a smile to my face every time I use them—I like to pass that feeling along whenever I can. They also serve as adorable table decorations. (\$7, musubikiln.com) -KAREN SHIMIZU, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

4. GOHAR SWAN LEMON SQUEEZER

This whimsical swan-shaped lemon juicer from Gohar World makes adding a splash of citrus to cocktails, salad dressings, and dips a true delight. It's cute enough to display on a home bar and always gets compliments from guests. (\$38, gohar.world)
-OSET BABÜR-WINTER, SENIOR DRINKS EDITOR

5. HAPPY ORGANICS BEESWAX CHERRY BIRTHDAY CANDLES

Happy Organics' cherry-shaped candles look identical to the fruit, with the farmers market container to boot; the green stem doubles as the wick. Put these on any dessert for a party showstopper. (\$20 for five candles, happy organics.co) -KRISTIN MONTEMARANO, COMMERCE WRITER

6. MOMA DESIGN STORE X-SMALL BOROSILICATE GLASS CUPS

These colorful, petite glass cups can hold hot or cold drinks and are dishwasher-safe for easy cleanup. Pinkies up! Although, let's be honest—the teeny handles really have room for one or two fingers. (\$69 for six glasses, store.moma .org) -LUCY SIMON, ASSISTANT EDITOR





DELICIOUS



For Delicious **Recipe Inspiration** www.hellmanns.com/recipes



In the Bag A grandmother's tried-and-true trick for perfect apple pie

By Claire Spollen

AS THE SMELL OF WARM BAKING SPICES filled every corner of the house, my grandmother glided around the kitchen with paper towels underfoot, cleaning spilled piles of flour. "Well, I was raised in the Depression," she said, dismissing my giggles. This was her explanation for all her silly but genius innovations. The aroma grew stronger, and I squirmed with anticipation as she pulled a crisped brown paper bag out of the oven: This was my favorite part of the process, other than the eating. We carefully tore the paper to reveal a perfectly browned crust with sweet, syrupy juices bubbling out. "It's perfect!" she said, beaming as we inhaled the rich fragrance of her brown bag apple pie.

During the Great Depression in her small hometown of Thomaston, Georgia, my grandmother learned this recipe from her mother. The secret to its excellence: an ordinary brown paper grocery bag that traps in all of the moisture, creating the perfect conditions for tender apples nestled in a golden brown, crisp crust.

As the years went by, I felt a sense of urgency to try to get her process down on paper. I tried to write down and remember every detail. "You have to get down and look at it like this," she would always say, lowering her head in line with the measuring cup. I remember how we laughed, competing for who could peel apples the fastest. I remember the choreography that seemed to be stored in the fibers of her muscles, how she slipped the finished pie into the brown paper bag, folding the open end over and tucking it under.

My grandmother is still with us today, but living with Alzheimer's disease—she doesn't remember much of her life, the people in it, or that her wonderful cooking used to be part of her identity. Earlier this year, my mom and I visited to soak up as much of her as we could, and I took over her kitchen and made her pie. I knew that she didn't really know who I was or that the pie was hers, but I couldn't help but be proud of myself as she ate every bite of it.

Brown Bag Apple Pie

ACTIVE 30 MIN; TOTAL 3 HR 30 MIN SERVES 8 TO 10

A classic apple pie from senior prop stylist Claire Spollen's grandmother Joan, the only special equipment this pie requires is a brown paper grocery bag. Baking the pie inside the bag locks in steam and prevents the top crust from burning, giving it a deeply golden hue. The pie dough is mixed with a fork and kneaded by hand, and it doesn't require chilling in the refrigerator. Using oil instead of butter makes for a delicate piecrust that's crumbly and tender with an old-school feel to it, while still being sturdy (no soggy bottoms here!). The filling of soft Granny Smith apples seasoned with cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves is sweet and nicely spiced. Serve with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream for an added sweet treat.

DOUGH

- 22/3 cups bleached all-purpose flour (such as Gold Medal) (about 111/3 oz.)
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- ²/₃ cup canola oil
- 6 Tbsp. whole milk

FILLING

- 4 medium (7-oz.) Granny Smith apples, peeled and cut into thin (1/4-inch-thick) wedges (about 5 cups)
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 11/2 tsp. ground cinnamon

- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/8 tsp. ground allspice
- 1/8 tsp. ground cloves
- 1 cup plus 2 tsp. granulated sugar, divided

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS

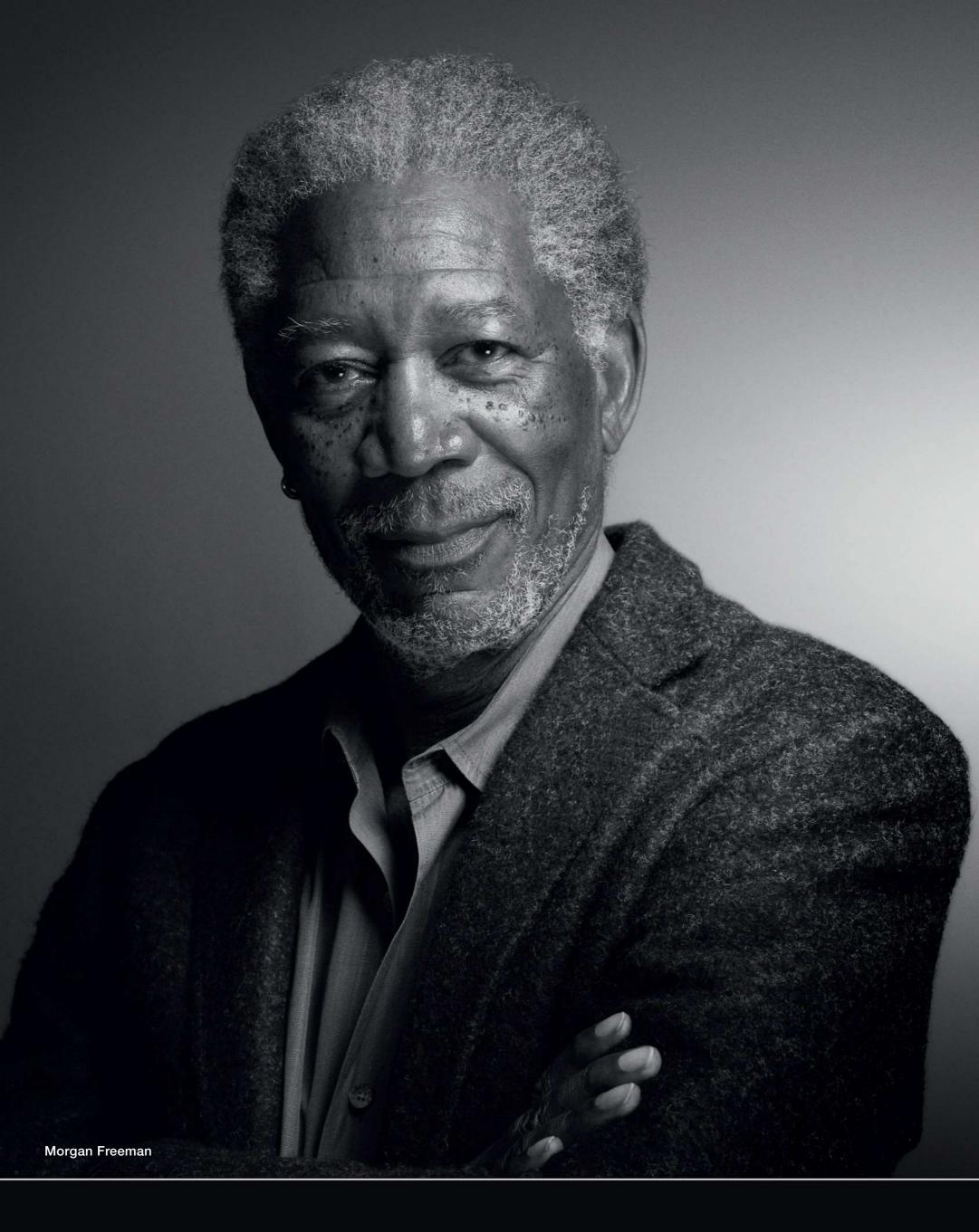
- 3 Tbsp. cold unsalted butter, cubed, divided
 - Brown paper grocery bag, preferably ink-free
- **1. Make the dough:** Preheat oven to 425°F. Stir together flour and salt in a large mixing bowl using a fork. Add oil and milk; stir until dough comes together. Knead dough using your hands until dough is smooth and no dry streaks remain.
- 2. Divide dough in half, and flatten each half into a disk, keeping 1 disk slightly larger for bottom crust. Cover using plastic wrap, and set aside. Clean and dry bowl.
- **3. Make the filling:** Gently toss together apples, cornstarch, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, allspice, cloves, and 1 cup sugar in cleaned bowl until thoroughly combined. Set aside, and let mixture stand for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until sugar is moistened.
- **4.** Meanwhile, unwrap larger dough disk, and place between 2 sheets of parchment paper. Roll out to a 13-inch round, about ½ inch thick. Peel off top sheet of parchment, and invert dough into a standard 9-inch pie plate; discard parchment. Gently press

- dough into corners; trim any overhang, and use scraps to patch any holes, if needed.
- **5.** Transfer filling to prepared pie plate. Dot 1 tablespoon cubed butter over apples. Unwrap smaller disk of dough, and place between 2 sheets of parchment paper. Roll out to a 12-inch round, about ½ inch thick.
- **6.** Peel off top sheet of parchment, and invert dough over filling. Peel off and discard remaining sheet of parchment. Trim any overhang; use scraps to patch any holes, if needed. Press edges of dough together, and crimp as desired.
- 7. Cut 3 small vents into top of pie, being careful not to cut too close to edges. Dot pie with remaining 2 tablespoons cubed butter, and sprinkle with remaining 2 teaspoons sugar.
- **8.** Place pie in a brown paper grocery bag, folding over end of bag to secure; transfer to a baking sheet (see Note). Bake in preheated oven for 50 minutes to 1 hour. Carefully cut bag with scissors, and slide the pie out. Let pie cool completely on a wire rack before serving, about 2 hours. —JOAN NALLEY BUCHANAN
- **MAKE AHEAD** Baked pie can be stored in an airtight container or covered at room temperature for up to 3 days.

NOTE Depending on the size of your oven, you may need to move the rack to the lower third position to prevent the bag from touching the heating element.

Alternatively, the bag can be sealed with staples or binder clips.







It takes time to become an icon



won't smoke up your house.

By John Somerall

I HAVE A BIT OF AN OBSESSION with grills and smokers. I've personally tested over 40 of them, and my backyard often resembles a showroom featuring a seemingly never-ending rotation of outdoor appliances. And yet, I'd never experienced a machine that would let me smoke meat from the comfort of my kitchen until I tried GE's Profile Smart Indoor Smoker.

This smoker is much more compact than outdoor alternatives; it's approximately the same size as a big toaster oven (16.5 by 20.35 inches). This smoker requires very little input from the user and consistently yields flavorful, juicy, and tender smoked meats, making it a fantastic choice for beginners and seasoned pitmasters alike. The preheating process is quick, and the smoking chamber has excellent heat-retention properties

and generates well-regulated temperatures that lead to precise cook times. I particularly liked being able to control the level of smoke with the turn of a dial to match the foods I was cooking. While preparing smoked turkey legs, I used the most intense smoke level to smoke the legs at 275°F for about 2 hours, and the results were even better than some outdoor smokers I've used. And I found there was no need to worry about my home filling with smoke-the filtration system ensures absolutely nothing but warm air is released via the rear exhaust vents.

Best of all, the smoker is easy to clean: The interior of the smoker requires a quick scrub with a sponge and warm soapy water after each session, and the racks and rack supports can be washed in a standard dishwasher. (\$999, geappliances.com)



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Kaysen Point 2007 F&W Best New Chef Gavin Kaysen is paving the way forward for cooks in Minneapolis and beyond.

By Kate Heddings

IN 2000, chef Gavin Kaysen picked up a copy of *Food & Wine* with 10 of the year's Best New Chefs smiling on the cover. He decided right then that he would be one of those chefs one day. He ripped the magazine cover in half, stuck the "Food" part in his wallet, and handed the "Wine" side to his colleague at Domaine Chandon in Yountville, California. He said, "Keep this in your pocket until we win." Seven years later, when Kaysen became a 2007 F&W Best New Chef as the executive chef at El Bizcocho in San Diego, he took the torn cover out of his wallet and gave it to then–F&W Editor in Chief Dana Cowin. She still has the torn cover framed.

After winning, Kaysen moved to New York City to work for Daniel Boulud (himself a 1988 F&W Best New Chef), forging a friendship and partnership that continues to this day. He moved

back to his hometown of Minneapolis in 2014 to be closer to his family and opened Spoon and Stable, a decidedly Midwestern restaurant informed by French cuisine with dishes like bison tartare and creamy spinach with fried cheese curds. It immediately resonated with local diners as well as employees. "I think it changed the landscape of our dining scene," says Kaysen. "People who worked here have moved on to open, manage, or run great places on their own in the Twin Cities; it has become a family tree of talent." For example, former Spoon and Stable executive pastry chef Diane Moua went on to open Hmong-inspired restaurant Diane's Place, and Adam Ritter, previously Spoon and Stable's chef de cuisine, now owns French-American eatery Bûcheron.

Kaysen now has five concepts in the Twin Cities with his restaurant group, Soigné Hospitality, including Spoon and Stable,

FOOD&WINE NOVEMBER 2024 illustration by NATALIE FOSS



inspired Mara; Cooks | Bellecour; Socca Café; and Demi, an upscale restaurant that recently became a member of Relais & Châteaux, a prestigious association of hotels and restaurants from around the world.

In the past decade, Kaysen has maintained a tight focus on technique and ingredients, but his approach to food has evolved. "[Since coming to] Minnesota, I have learned to edit my food more," he shares. "It's more simplified. I think a lot of people expect a show, but I don't want to cook that way. I'm not interested in following a trend."

That's a good thing, because when he's not running a restaurant, bakery, or his sports-focused catering business called KZ Provisioning with Andrew Zimmern, he's helping the next generation of chefs grow. In 2015, Kaysen created The Synergy Series, welcoming numerous chefs, like Kristen Kish and F&W Best New Chefs Nancy Silverton (1990) and Thomas Keller (1988), into the kitchen at Spoon and Stable to collaborate and cook. This led to Dialogue, a speaker series in which the chefs share their struggles and successes with younger industry professionals. Both programs will culminate in a book, publishing this winter, that will memorialize the participating chefs' meals at Spoon and Stable, as well as their stories of mentorship and collaboration. The book proceeds will support Ment'or, a nonprofit founded by Thomas Keller, Daniel Boulud, and the late Jérôme Bocuse that helps young culinarians find inspiring work cooking in restaurants all around the world. "The organization gives us an opportunity to share and give back to the next generation" says Kaysen. "There is nothing more gratifying than that."

NEWS AND NOTES

Cookbooks

Tom Colicchio (1991) released his memoir and cookbook, Why I Cook, in October. This January, Douglas Keane (2006) is publishing a memoir as well, titled Culinary Leverage: A Journey Through the Heat.

Openings

In October, Mary Attea and Camari Mick (2024) opened all-day, Levantineinspired restaurant Cafe Zaffri in New York City, and Brad Kilgore (2016) opened Cafe Sebastian, a casual bistro, in San Francisco's Transamerica Pyramid. Later this winter, Dave Beran (2014) will open Seline, a tastingmenu restaurant, in Santa Monica, California.

Baked Goat Cheese with Herbs

ACTIVE 10 MIN; TOTAL 20 MIN SERVES 10

In this quick appetizer from 2007 F&W Best New Chef Gavin Kaysen of Spoon and Stable in Minneapolis, tangy goat cheese bakes in a blend of saba—a tart syrup made from the juice of grapes—and olive oil infused with rosemary, garlic, and shallot. It's a perfect starter or snack for cozy winter nights.

- 1 (10- to 12-oz.) goat cheese log
- 2 Tbsp. saba
- 1/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided, plus more for garnish
- (5-inch) thyme sprigs
- 2 medium unpeeled garlic cloves, smashed
- (8-inch) rosemary sprig
- 1 medium (1-oz.) shallot, cut in half lengthwise
- 1 (1-lb.) French baguette, cut diagonally into 1/2-inch-thick slices
- 1. Preheat oven to 400°F with racks in upper third and lower third positions. Press cheese into a 4-inch round cookie cutter in the center of a small ovenproof dish; remove cookie cutter. Pour saba and 1/4 cup olive oil around cheese. Place thyme, garlic, rosemary, and shallot in oil mixture around cheese.
- 2. Brush both sides of bread slices evenly with remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil. Place on a large rimmed baking sheet.
- 3. Bake cheese on lower rack in preheated oven until oil starts to bubble and cheese is still firm, 7 to 8 minutes. Bake bread on upper rack until crispy and golden, 6 to 8 minutes (see Note). Garnish cheese with baked thyme sprigs and a drizzle of olive oil. Serve with toasted bread. —GAVIN KAYSEN, SPOON AND STABLE, MINNEAPOLIS

WINE A crisply herbal Sancerre: 2022 Alphonse Mellot La Moussière

NOTE Bread can also be cooked on a grill pan over medium-high until grill marks appear, 2 to 4 minutes per side.





"Travel and food are the ultimate ways of bringing people together - to savor unique flavors, experience different destinations and create shared memories."

GIADA DE LAURENTIIS

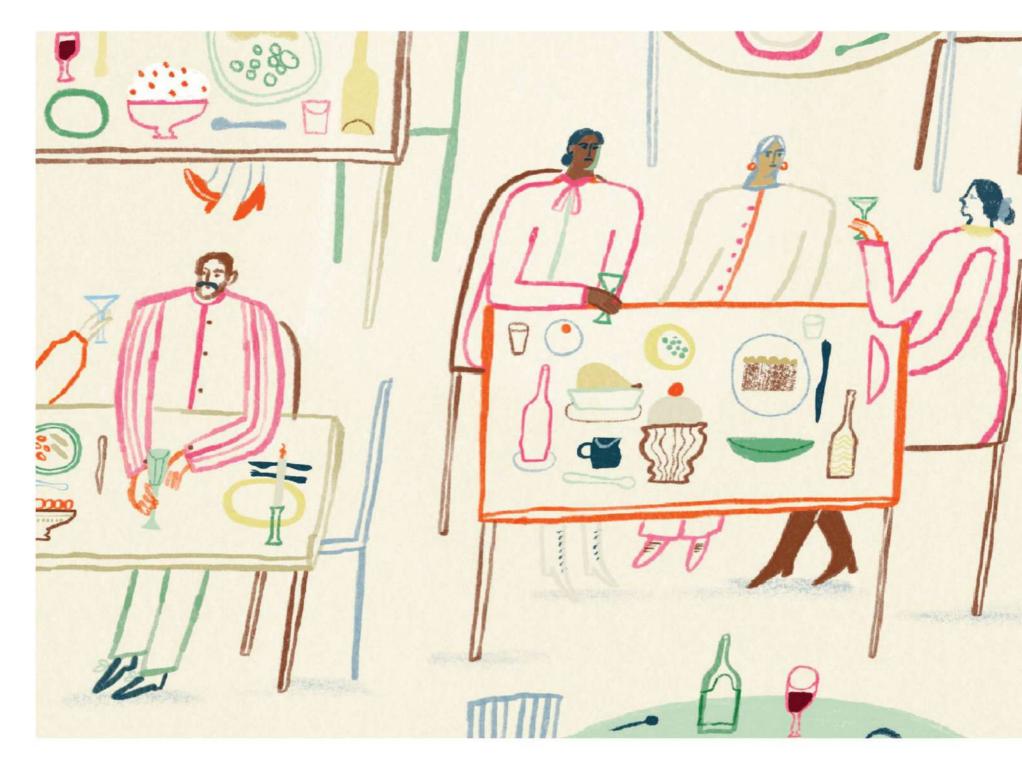
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SMALL SHIP LUXURY



THE ESSAY

A Regular Holiday Restaurant Thanksgivings offer a chance to show gratitude.

By Kat Kinsman

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THE FIRST TIME I HAD THANKSGIVING DINNER in a restaurant was at the tail end of the 20th century. My parents had made the trip from Kentucky to Baltimore, and what's more, they'd offered to pay for my train ticket and dinner at what seemed like an impossibly fancy hotel restaurant buffet, where I loaded my plate with dressing, stewed green beans, rolls, and sweets.

I stared wild-eyed at the dessert towers, and to extract myself from the thought of how messy my pleather purse might get if I filled it with napkin-wrapped slices of sweet potato and pecan pie, I forced my eyes to other tables. Most were packed with the likely families—some booming, boisterous, and at ease in their multigenerational bubble, others palpably about to burst with quiet tension, the clink of utensils against china standing in for conversation. One solitary couple stood out from the crowd, so elegant and content in their own company that I could not resist their gravity. Servers and bussers bantered with them, leaving their orbit smiling despite the obvious chaos of a holiday lunch shift. Maybe they were regulars. Maybe they were big tippers, palming wads of cash to staff. Maybe they were just vocally mindful of the fact that the people tending to them were, you know, people. It stuck with me.

It wasn't until 2023 that I experienced my next Thanksgiving at a restaurant–I myself am usually toting insulated bags of collard greens and casseroles to friends' homes, occasionally after having to work. But last year, my husband, Douglas, and I spent our holiday at Francie, a Michelin-starred bistro in Brooklyn owned by my close friend John Winterman. It was the first time they'd opened for Thanksgiving service, and John was, understandably, nervous. Asking people to work on a holiday that's so homebound can be a tough thing to do, as he knows from his decades at restaurant work, but necessary for the financial health of the restaurant. I'm also keenly aware that holidays can be an emotional minefield for both servers and those being served-but only one side of that relationship has the freedom to show it. And being the weirdo feelings-sponge that I am, I was hell-bent on trying to be the best customer ever. I asked a few industry friends for counsel.

"If guests choose to be at a restaurant for their holiday meal, be mindful that the staff are sacrificing the basic pleasure of connecting with their loved ones to help them celebrate," said Cheetie Kumar, owner of Ajja in Raleigh, North Carolina.

FOOD&WINE NOVEMBER 2024 illustration by AMYISLA MCCOMBIE



"Take the spirit of the season, rooted in empathy, in how you approach your experience."

Travis Milton is the chef at Hickory at Nicewonder Farm & Vineyards in Bristol, Virginia, a mountain resort that's a popular holiday destination. "The guests staying with us are celebrating with family or having a getaway because the holiday is complicated for them," he explained. "So being in the restaurant with the guests and my crew, giving thanks and celebrating each other, makes it my favorite day of the year to be here."

With this in mind, I reassured myself that, if nothing else, we could provide ballast for John. We texted updates to his wife, Jenn, and our other friends from Francie's bar. "It's packed!" "Would it be weird if I filled my purse with this cranberry mostarda?" (Apparently, some things never change.) We watched John and his team weave magic around the dining room, and we tucked into our turkey roulade with jus and brown butterparsnip puree, along with the chestnut dressing that the chef and co-owner, Christopher Cipollone, made to honor his late father. Though he wouldn't get to sit down to a plate of his own for many more hours, John was in his element. Serving people

feeds him—and he made sure his team got fed, too, with Francie's signature duck leg, turkey, and sides during pre- and post-service family meals.

In the moments John was able to untangle from the fray, he checked in with us, giving reports from the tables around the room. "That 10-top family didn't bother with the Thanksgiving prix fixe and just ordered from the regular menu, so we might not even do it next year. I *told* those parents I could get the kid a plastic cup—that glass was handblown! That guy eating by himself down the bar is a regular; I guess he just wanted some peace this year. Do you want to try the special dessert that Chef made?"

"I'm sure it's wonderful," I told him, "but I'm so, so full. See you tomorrow—and save our spot for next year?" He handed me the bag full of our leftovers, and I thanked a passing server for the dozenth time. As I waited for my coat, I suddenly noticed someone running up beside us—a former neighbor. "Hi! I brought my family here because my boyfriend is a sous chef and we wanted to support him. I saw you two, but I didn't want to interrupt. You must come here a lot. You seem so at home."

HOW TO GIVE THANKS TO RESTAURANT WORKERS

Eating at a restaurant on a holiday? Here are a few things to consider.

Give the Host an Extra-Warm Greeting

Acknowledgement goes a long way, says Lydia Castro, who runs the New Orleans restaurant Acamaya with her sister, 2022 F&W Best New Chef Ana Castro. "Say hi to the host rather than just saying, 'Table for two.' 'Happy holidays' goes a long way, too."

Bring Along a Taste of Home

At the 131-year-old Commander's Palace—also in New Orleans—coproprietors Ti Adelaide Martin and her cousin Lally Brennan take pride in seeing families who return year after year, even passing their reservations down to younger family members. The restaurant makes a "holiday-ish" meal for staff, but Martin says it's especially appreciated when guests go out of their way to thank the team. "Some folks will bring a little homemade treat for their favorite staff. That is always a big hit."

Leave a Thoughtful Note

Employees at Commander's Palace will often receive handwritten notes from guests expressing their appreciation. Martin will read them aloud at team meetings and post them. "That is like our applause. We read them at our meetings and post them on our board," says Martin. "We believe we are in the business of making dining memories, but you can make a memory for our team as well."



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HANDBOOK



GLAZED HAM

LACQUERED AND FRAGRANT, served on a large white oval china platter decorated with tiny roses, the roast ham on my family's table always drew the spotlight, despite being surrounded by all the fixins.

This Spiced Cider-Glazed Ham is reminiscent of Sunday suppers and Thanksgivings at my Granny's house. It starts with a high-quality bone-in ham-the bone is key, as it enhances the flavor of the meat, helps retain moisture, keeps the meat tender, and is essential to making a delicious soup or pot of beans after. (See "Keep on Ham-ing," below right.) I recommend Berkshire ham, which comes from heritage-breed pigs of the same name. Berkshire hams are well marbled and have a more meaty, concentrated flavor compared to most grocery store hams because they're not pumped with water and preservatives. For even better taste and greater ease of carving, opt for a spiral-cut ham: The glaze melts and gets trapped in the layers for sweetness in every bite. (Any leftover ham also makes next-day sandwiches that rival the big meal.)

In the autumn months, when apples are at their peak, I like to use fresh apple cider to bring in rich natural sugars and a hint of tartness to enhance the smokiness of the ham. In this recipe, the apple cider is reduced with other ingredients, like bourbon (my grandmother's favorite), brown sugar (which contains molasses for a hint of bitterness and deep color), Dijon mustard (which adds sharpness to the tang of the apple cider), and hearty warming spices (for flavor complexity) to create a thick, syrupy glaze. The glaze caramelizes under the heat, lending a beautiful, sleek, glossy finish to the ham that is delicious as well as visually appealing.

My method calls for baking the ham covered with aluminum foil at first so that the meat gently soaks up the aromatic glaze while retaining its juiciness. Toward the end, you uncover the ham to allow the exterior to caramelize and turn golden brown, creating the ham's stunning, mouthwatering crust. –*CARLA HALL*





MAKE THE CIDER GLAZE

Simmer apple cider, brown sugar, butter, bourbon, mustard, vinegar, and spices until reduced and slightly thickened, about 25 minutes.



Place ham, cut side down, in a baking pan. Brush cider glaze evenly over ham, allowing mixture to drip between slices.





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BAKE AND BASTE THE HAMCover pan with foil, and bake ham for about 1 hour and 30 minutes. Uncover; continue baking, basting ham with drippings, until golden brown.

REDUCE THE DRIPPINGS

Strain drippings from bottom of pan; discard solids. Boil drippings over medium until syrupy; pour drippings over ham, and serve.

KEEP ON HAM-ING

From a glistening Thanksgiving centerpiece to a ham-and-cheese quiche for weekend brunch, glazed ham is the gift that keeps on giving. The slices of salty meat with sweet caramelized edges can be piled into buttery biscuit sandwiches or chopped and stirred into a creamy pasta bake, bean soup, or fried rice. Because the ham has been both cured and smoked, the leftover meat can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week or frozen for up to 2 months. Once the meat slices have all been shaved off, simmer the bone (and any bits of meat attached) in water with aromatics for a rich ham stock. It's the perfect base for wintry soups, stews, risottos, and braised greens. If you've had your fill of ham for the holidays, the stock can be stored in airtight containers in the freezer for up to 2 months. $-PAIGE\ GRANDJEAN$



Carla Hall's Spiced Cider-Glazed Ham

ACTIVE 1 HR 15 MIN; TOTAL 3 HR; SERVES 10

This holiday-worthy ham glistens with a brown sugar—bourbon glaze infused with spices. Some spiral-cut hams come with a bag of cloyingly sweet premade glaze; we recommend discarding it in favor of this easy cider-based glaze. Bake the ham covered initially to lock in moisture; finish baking uncovered for a glossy, golden crust.

- 1 (7- to 8-lb.) spiral-cut bone-in ham (preferably Berkshire) (see Note)
- 1 cup apple cider
- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 Tbsp. (1 oz.) bourbon
- 2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. black peppercorns
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg

- 6 whole cloves
- 1 cinnamon stickSmall apples, for garnish (optional)
- 1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Place ham, cut side down, in a 13- x 9-inch baking pan. Let stand at room temperature 30 minutes.
- **2.** Bring apple cider, brown sugar, butter, bourbon, mustard, vinegar, peppercorns, nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon stick to a boil in a small saucepan over mediumhigh. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, whisking occasionally, until reduced to about ³/₄ cup, about 25 minutes.
- 3. Brush cider glaze evenly over ham, allowing mixture to drip between slices. Cover pan tightly with Reynolds Wrap® Nonstick Foil; bake in preheated oven until a meat thermometer inserted into thickest portion of ham registers 95°F, about 1 hour and 30 minutes. Uncover pan. Baste ham with drippings in bottom of pan. Continue baking, uncovered, basting every 15 minutes, until ham is glazed and beginning

to brown and a meat thermometer registers 140°F, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Transfer ham to a platter; let rest 10 minutes.

4. Strain drippings from bottom of baking pan into a small saucepan; discard solids. Skim off the majority of fat using a spoon; discard. Bring drippings to a boil over medium. Cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, 3 to 5 minutes. Pour drippings evenly over ham; serve warm or at room temperature, garnished with small apples, if desired. —*CARLA HALL*

MAKE AHEAD Cider glaze can be made up to 2 days in advance and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Warm over low heat before brushing on ham.

WINE A California Pinot Noir with dark cherry notes: 2021 Merry Edwards Russian River Valley

NOTE Spiral-cut bone-in Berkshire hams are available at specialty grocery stores or online at heritageberkshire.com.

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Sur la table



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Thanksgiving Hall of Fame

A star-studded lineup of chefs share sides and sweets for your holiday table.

OVER THE PAST 46 YEARS, countless chefs and food personalities have shared their favorite Thanksgiving recipes in the pages of *Food & Wine*. This year, we revisited some of the most-loved recipes from nearly five decades of holiday feasts, retesting and tasting them and, in some cases, tweaking them for today's tastes. Some we're republishing here without modification—Anthony Bourdain and Laurie Woolever's Candied Sweet Potatoes with Bourbon (recipe p. 40) are just as flawless and simple as when they first appeared in 2016. Others got a glow-up: A rich chocolate glaze adds a luxurious veneer to Ruth Reichl's tender Orange Soufflé Coffee Cake (recipe p. 48), and we reimagined Daniel Humm's fragrant garlic rolls as luscious Pull-Apart Garlic Knots (recipe p. 42). The result? A lineup of holiday classics that you can serve for years to come. —DIANA PEREZ

Kristen Kish's Beets and Green Beans with Mustard Vinaigrette

ACTIVE 35 MIN; TOTAL 2 HR, PLUS 2 HR CHILLING; SERVES 8

Earthy roasted red beets and smoky charred green beans are marinated in a simple vinaigrette with apple cider vinegar and whole-grain mustard. Served at room temperature or chilled, this colorful side dish can be made up to two days in advance. Garnish with crunchy fried shallots and hazelnuts just before serving.

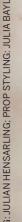
- 3 lb. trimmed small red beets, scrubbed
- 8 thyme sprigs
- 5 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2½ tsp. kosher salt, divided, plus more to taste
- 1 tsp. black pepper, divided
- 2 Tbsp. grapeseed oil, divided
- 1 lb. haricots verts (French green beans), trimmed, divided
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 1 Tbsp. whole-grain mustard
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh oregano
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
 Fried shallots (see Note), chopped
 roasted hazelnuts, and chopped
 parsley, for garnish
- 1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Toss together beets, thyme sprigs, 3 tablespoons olive oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon

pepper in a large baking dish; cover baking dish tightly with aluminum foil. Bake in preheated oven until beets are tender, about 1 hour and 15 minutes. Remove foil; let beets stand until cool enough to handle, about 15 minutes. Peel beets; cut into ½-inch-thick wedges. Discard thyme sprigs.

- 2. Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon grapeseed oil in a large cast-iron skillet over high until smoking. Add half of the haricots verts in an even layer. Cook, undisturbed, until charred on 1 side, about 2 minutes. Continue cooking, stirring often, until crisp-tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Repeat process with remaining 1 tablespoon grapeseed oil and remaining haricots verts. Sprinkle charred haricots verts with ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper.
- **3.** Whisk together vinegar, honey, mustard, oregano, chopped thyme, remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil, remaining 1½ teaspoons salt, and remaining ½ teaspoon pepper in a large bowl. Stir in beets and haricots verts. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours or up to 2 days.
- **4.** To serve, season beet mixture to taste with salt. Transfer to a serving platter, and garnish with fried shallots, hazelnuts, and parsley. —KRISTEN KISH

MAKE AHEAD Beet mixture can be prepared through step 3 and stored covered in the refrigerator up to 2 days.

NOTE Fried shallots are available at most Asian grocery stores or online at afroasiaa.com.





José Andrés' Apple Salad with **Almonds and Blue Cheese**

ACTIVE 20 MIN; TOTAL 25 MIN; SERVES 6

Crisp and refreshing, this Granny Smith apple salad features toasted almonds, blue cheese, and a lightly sweet and pungent garlic vinaigrette. Store sliced apples up to overnight in cold water with a squeeze of lemon juice to prevent them from oxidizing—drain and pat dry just before making the salad.

- 1 cup blanched whole almonds
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- garlic cloves
- 2 Tbsp. sherry vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped shallot Kosher salt, to taste Black pepper, to taste
- 3 large Granny Smith apples
- 3 small heads white Belgian endive, cored, leaves cut in half on an angle
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh chives
- oz. blue cheese (such as Cabrales), crumbled (about 11/4 cups)
- 1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spread almonds on a small baking sheet, and bake until lightly toasted, about 10 minutes. Transfer almonds to a cutting board, and let cool. Coarsely chop, and set aside.
- 2. Meanwhile, heat olive oil and garlic cloves in a small saucepan over medium. Cook, stirring often, until garlic is golden brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool for 5 minutes.
- 3. Transfer garlic to a cutting board, and transfer oil to a large serving bowl. Smash garlic into a paste using a fork, and add to bowl with oil. Whisk in vinegar and shallot. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- 4. Halve and core apples; cut apples into 1/4-inch-thick matchsticks. Add apples, endive, chives, and reserved almonds to bowl with garlic mixture; toss to combine. Divide salad evenly among serving plates; top with blue cheese, and serve immediately. - JOSÉ ANDRÉS

MAKE AHEAD Almonds can be toasted and chopped up to 1 week in advance and stored in an airtight container at room temperature.

WINE A peach- and almond-scented Riesling: 2022 Domaine Weinbach Clos des Capucins Cuvée Théo

NOTE Cabrales cheese is a cave-aged blue cheese with a bold, sharp flavor. It is available at specialty cheese stores or online at tienda.com.

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Buttery Pull-Apart Garlic Knots

ACTIVE 50 MIN; TOTAL 3 HR 20 MIN SERVES 10

A dose of garlic butter and a dusting of Parmigiano-Reggiano give this fun pullapart bread a savory finish. Inspired by Daniel Humm's 2017 recipe for classic rounded rolls, this version features a clever "twist"—knot-shaped rolls, with plenty of crevices for cheese and butter in every bite.

KNOTS

- 1 cup whole milk, at room temperature
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 (1/4-oz.) pkg. active dry yeast
- 4 cups all-purpose flour (about 17 oz.)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter (4 oz.), cubed and softened, plus more for greasing
- 1/4 cup finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (about 1 oz.), plus more for garnish
 Finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, for garnish

GARLIC BUTTER

- 3/4 cup unsalted butter (6 oz.)
- 1/3 cup garlic cloves (from 1 large head), finely chopped
- 1. Begin making the knots: Whisk together milk, egg, and yeast in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment. Add flour, sugar, and salt; beat on low speed until a stiff dough forms, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl as needed. Gradually add softened butter, a few cubes at a time, beating on low until butter is mostly incorporated after each addition, 7 to 9 minutes total. Once all butter has been

- added, continue beating dough on low until smooth and elastic, 3 to 4 minutes.
- **2.** Transfer dough to a lightly greased large bowl; cover with plastic wrap, and let proof in a warm place until doubled in size, 1 hour and 30 minutes to 2 hours.
- **3. Make the garlic butter:** Melt butter in a medium saucepan over low. Add garlic; cook, stirring often, until golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Pour butter mixture through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a medium microwavable bowl; reserve garlic and strained butter separately.
- **4. Finish making the knots:** Turn dough out onto a clean work surface; cut into about 30 (1-ounce) pieces. Roll each piece into an 8-inch-long rope; tie each rope into a knot. Roll knots in strained butter, letting excess butter drip off; arrange knots in an even layer in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet or 13- x 9-inch baking pan. Add reserved garlic to remaining strained butter; set aside.
- **5.** Preheat oven to 375°F. Sprinkle knots evenly with Parmigiano-Reggiano; cover loosely with plastic wrap. Let proof in a warm place until almost doubled in size, 35 to 45 minutes. Uncover knots; bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center of knots registers 190°F, 25 to 30 minutes.
- **6.** Microwave reserved garlic butter on HIGH in 10-second intervals until just melted, 20 to 30 seconds. Brush garlic butter evenly over warm knots. Garnish with Parmigiano-Reggiano and parsley. Serve warm. —ADAPTED FROM DANIEL HUMM

WINE A dry, party-ready Prosecco: 2022 Perlage Col di Manza

MAKE AHEAD Knots can be prepared through step 4 and refrigerated, covered, up to overnight. Proceed as directed; increase proofing time to 45 to 55 minutes. Store garlic butter in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.







ACTIVE 40 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 40 MIN SERVES 8

A reimagining of a spinach and squash gratin created by Daniel Boulud in 2002, these stuffed squash boats are a rich and creamy side dish. Acorn squash halves, with their cuplike shape, make ideal serving vessels for cheesy creamed spinach.

- 2 (about 1½-lb.) acorn squash, halved lengthwise and seeded
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper, plus more to taste
- 2 (10-oz.) bags fresh baby spinach (about 16 cups)
- 2½ cups heavy cream
- 1/4 cup crème fraîche
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese (about 21/4 oz.) (see Note), divided

- 1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Cut a thin sliver off back side of each squash half to help it sit flat. Place squash, cavity sides up, on an aluminum foil–lined baking sheet. Drizzle evenly with oil; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast in preheated oven until just tender, about 40 minutes. Remove from oven; increase oven temperature to 475°F.
- 2. Meanwhile, heat a medium saucepan over medium-high. Add spinach, 1 handful at a time; cook, stirring often, until wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer spinach to a fine wire-mesh strainer; let drain and cool for about 20 minutes. Wipe saucepan clean. Squeeze spinach with a clean kitchen towel to remove as much liquid as possible; coarsely chop and set aside.
- 3. Scoop out about ¼ cup squash from each roasted half, leaving cavities with a ¼- to ½-inch-thick border of flesh. Finely chop scooped squash. Bring cream and chopped squash to a boil in reserved saucepan over medium, stirring often;

reduce heat to low, and simmer, stirring often, until cream is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 10 minutes. Add spinach, and cook, stirring often, until thick and creamy, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in crème fraîche and ½ cup Parmesan. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

4. Spoon evenly divided spinach mixture into squash halves; sprinkle with remaining ½ cup Parmesan. Bake at 475°F until Parmesan is melted and beginning to brown, 5 to 8 minutes. Serve immediately. —DANIEL BOULUD

MAKE AHEAD Unfilled roasted squash halves can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 day.

WINE A California Chardonnay with pear/apple notes: 2022 Lioco Sonoma County

NOTE Grate Parmesan using the smallest holes of a box grater to form fine, crumbly shreds.



Martha Stewart's Fruit and Nut Stuffing

ACTIVE 45 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 50 MIN SERVES 12

Packed with crunchy nuts, warm spices, and pops of fresh and dried fruit, this sourdough stuffing pairs flawlessly with turkey and ham alike. Toast the bread cubes and soak the prunes and dried apricots in bourbon a day in advance to get a head start on preparing the stuffing.

- 1 cup pitted prunes
- 3/4 cup dried apricots, chopped
- 3/4 cup (6 oz.) bourbon
- 8 cups torn (1½- to 2-inch pieces) sourdough (about 12 oz.)
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter (2 oz.), plus more for greasing
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped (about 2½ cups)
- 1 Granny Smith apple, unpeeled, cored, and chopped (about 1½ cups)
- 3 celery stalks, chopped (about 11/4 cups)
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten

- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh parsley, plus more for garnish
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1/8 tsp. ground cloves (optional)
- 1 cup unsalted cashews
- 1 cup unsalted walnuts, chopped
- 1 cup fresh or frozen (unthawed) cranberries
- 1. Preheat oven to 300°F. Combine prunes, apricots, and bourbon in a medium microwavable bowl, pressing to ensure fruit is submerged. Microwave on HIGH until hot, 2 to 3 minutes. Let stand at room temperature 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Pour fruit mixture through a fine wire-mesh strainer set over a small bowl; reserve bourbon for another use (see Note). Set fruit aside.
- 2. Spread sourdough pieces evenly on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven until lightly toasted, about 20 minutes, tossing occasionally. Remove from oven; increase oven temperature to 375°F.

- **3.** Heat butter in a large skillet over medium until melted. Add onion, apple, and celery; cook, stirring often, until softened, about 10 minutes. Set aside.
- **4.** Whisk together broth, eggs, parsley, salt, cinnamon, ginger, black pepper, cayenne pepper, and cloves (if using) in a large bowl until well combined. Add toasted sourdough pieces, onion mixture, fruit mixture, cashews, walnuts, and cranberries; stir until well combined and liquid is mostly absorbed.
- **5.** Grease a 13- x 9-inch baking dish with butter; add sourdough mixture, spreading in an even layer. Cover dish with aluminum foil; bake at 375°F for 25 minutes. Remove foil, and continue baking until top is toasted and stuffing is set, about 15 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes. Garnish with parsley. —MARTHA STEWART

MAKE AHEAD Dried fruit can be soaked up to 1 day in advance and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Sourdough pieces can be toasted up to 1 day in advance and stored in a large ziplock plastic bag at room temperature.

NOTE Reserve fruit-infused bourbon for making cocktails or bourbon balls.





Dorie Greenspan's Mini Cranberry Tarts

ACTIVE 1 HR; TOTAL 2 HR 30 MIN MAKES 24 MINI TARTS

These tiny treats feature flaky pastry shells filled with a nut-and-dried-fruit-studded cranberry sauce. A splash of Grand Marnier cuts the sweetness while reinforcing the flavors of the orange zest and juice. Use either canned or leftover homemade cranberry sauce to make these bite-size desserts a breeze.

- 1 (14-oz.) can whole-berry cranberry sauce, or 1½ cups leftover cranberry sauce
- 1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored, and chopped (about 1½ cups)
- 1 green Anjou pear, peeled, cored, and chopped (about 11/4 cups)
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup dried pineapple or dried pear (see Note), finely chopped
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 Tbsp. grated orange zest plus ⅓ cup fresh orange juice (from 2 oranges)
- 1½ tsp. ground cinnamon Pinch of ground nutmeg
- 1/3 cup coarsely chopped walnuts, pecans, or macadamia nuts
- 3 Tbsp. orange liqueur (such as Grand Marnier) or dark rum
 Pâte Brisée (recipe follows)
 All-purpose flour, for work surface
 Whipped cream (optional)
- 1. Preheat oven to 400°F with rack in lower third position. Stir together cranberry sauce, apple, pear, sugar, dried pineapple, raisins, orange zest and juice, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium, stirring often. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened, 20 to 30 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in nuts and liqueur. Transfer cranberry mixture to a medium bowl; chill, uncovered, while preparing tart shells.
- 2. Let pâte brisée stand at room temperature 10 to 15 minutes if needed to soften. Unwrap 1 dough disk; roll dough out on a lightly floured surface to about ½-inch thick. Cut dough using a 3½-inch round cutter into 12 circles, rerolling scraps as needed. Press dough circles into bottom and up sides of an ungreased 12-cup muffin tray. Prick bottom of each shell with a fork. Repeat with remaining dough disk and a second 12-cup muffin tray. Freeze tart shells for 20 minutes.

- **3.** Line each frozen shell with a 3-inch square of parchment paper or a paper muffin liner; fill each with 2 to 3 tablespoons dried beans, uncooked rice, or pie weights. Bake in preheated oven until edges of crust are set, about 8 minutes. Remove from oven; carefully remove liners and weights.
- **4.** Return tart shells to oven; bake until lightly golden, 10 to 15 minutes, rotating pans halfway through bake time. Cool in pans on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove tart shells from pans; cool completely on a wire rack, about 30 minutes.
- **5.** To assemble, divide cranberry filling evenly among tart shells (about 2 tablespoons each). Top with whipped cream, if desired. —DORIE GREENSPAN

MAKE AHEAD Cranberry filling can be made up to 5 days in advance and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Tart shells can be baked up to 2 days in advance and stored in an airtight container at room temperature.

NOTE Dried pineapple or dried pears are available at most grocery stores or online at nuts.com.

Pâte Brisée

ACTIVE 20 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 20 MIN MAKES $1\frac{1}{2}$ LB. DOUGH

Pâte brisée is a versatile, buttery, and tender pastry used for tarts and pies. Line the tart shells with parchment paper and fill them with beans or pie weights when baking—the weight prevents the pastry from slumping down the sides of the pan.

- 3 cups all-purpose flour (about 12³/₄ oz.)
- 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- ½ tsp. fine sea salt
- 1 cup unsalted butter (8 oz.), chilled and cut into ½-inch pieces
- 6 Tbsp. ice water, divided

Whisk together flour, sugar, and salt in a large bowl. Cut in butter using a pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle with ½ cup ice water; toss with a fork to combine. Sprinkle with remaining 2 tablespoons ice water; use fingers to work mixture into a dough. Gather dough into a ball. Divide ball in half; flatten each half into a 1-inch-thick disk. Wrap each disk tightly with plastic wrap; refrigerate at least 1 hour. —DORIE GREENSPAN

MAKE AHEAD Dough can be refrigerated for up to 3 days or frozen for up to 1 month; thaw in refrigerator overnight.



Ruth Reichl's Orange Soufflé Coffee Cake

ACTIVE 30 MIN; TOTAL 3 HR 15 MIN SERVES 10

To give this Bundt cake its delicate, soufflélike texture, Reichl whips eggs and sugar together until light and fluffy. The cake is flavored with fresh orange zest and juice and topped with a rich chocolaty glaze. Use a Microplane to zest the citrus, making sure to avoid the white pith, which has a bitter flavor. Resist opening the oven door during baking—the rapid change in temperature can cause the cake to fall.

CAKE

Unsalted butter, for greasing pan

- 11/2 cups granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup grapeseed oil or olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. grated orange zest plus ½ cup fresh orange juice (from 2 oranges), divided
- 2 cups bleached cake flour (about 7½ oz.), plus more for pan

13/4 tsp. baking powder

1/2 tsp. kosher salt

1 tsp. vanilla extract

CHOCOLATE GLAZE

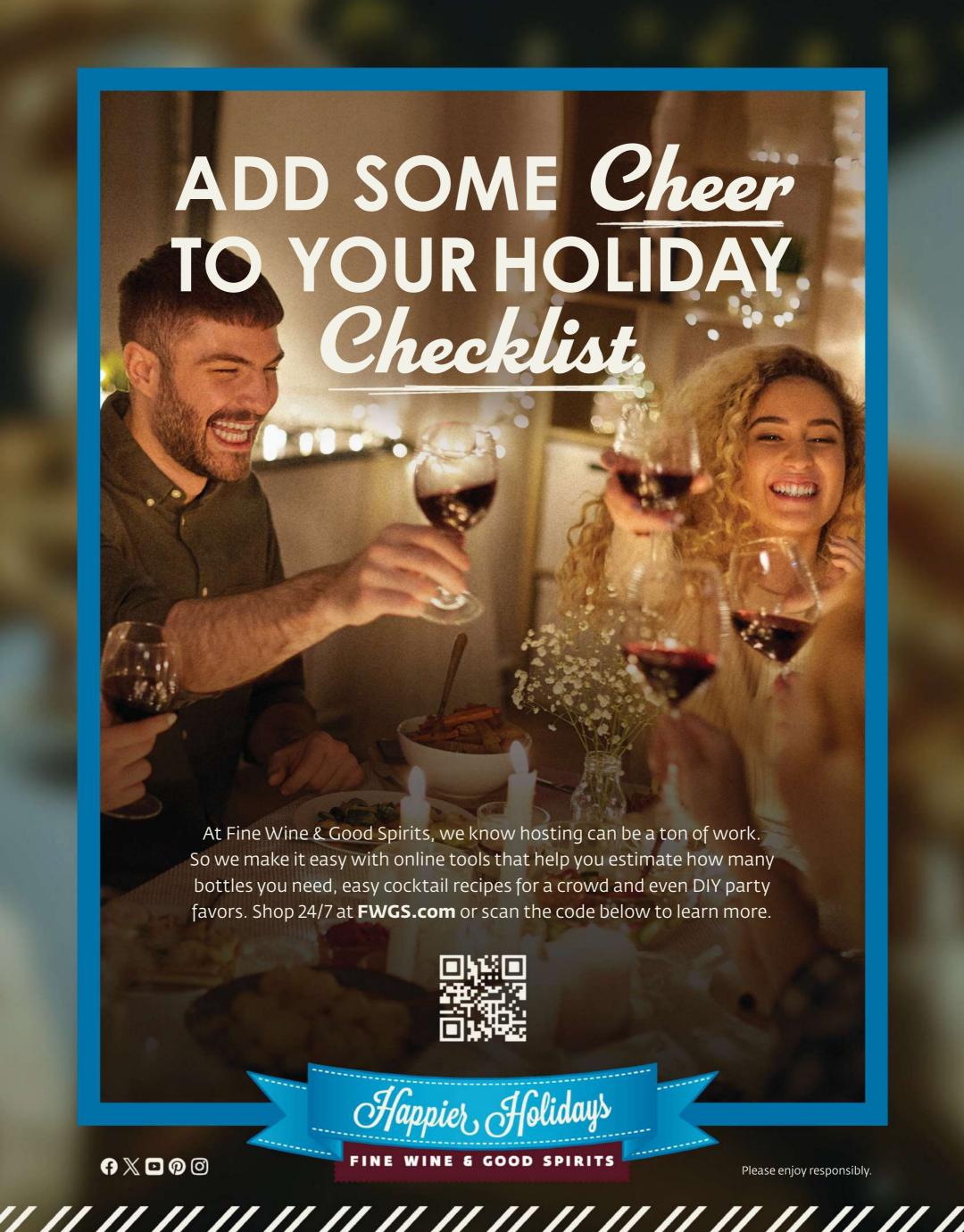
3/4 cup powdered sugar

1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa

- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp. instant espresso powder (optional)
- 1/8 tsp. kosher salt
- 3 Tbsp. fresh orange juice, divided Pomegranate arils, dried blood orange slices, and fresh citrus leaves, for garnish (optional)
- 1. Make the cake: Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter and flour a 10-cup Bundt pan; set aside. Beat sugar and eggs in a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment on medium-high speed until thick and fluffy, about 5 minutes. With mixer running, slowly drizzle in oil. Add orange zest. Beat on medium-high speed for 2 minutes.

- 2. Whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl. Reduce mixer speed to low; gradually add flour mixture to egg mixture, stopping to scrape down sides of bowl as needed. Fold in vanilla and orange juice with a rubber spatula until batter is smooth.
- 3. Pour batter into prepared pan; bake in preheated oven until a wooden pick inserted in center of cake comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cake cool in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Invert cake onto wire rack; cool completely, about 2 hours.
- 4. Make the glaze: Whisk together powdered sugar, cocoa, butter, vanilla, espresso powder (if using), salt, and 2 tablespoons orange juice in a medium bowl until smooth. Whisk in remaining 1 tablespoon orange juice, 1 teaspoon at a time, until desired consistency is reached. Spoon glaze evenly over cake; let stand 10 minutes. Garnish with pomegranate arils, dried orange slices, and citrus leaves, if desired. —RUTH REICHL

MAKE AHEAD Store cake, covered, at room temperature for up to 2 days.





HAPPY HOLIDAYS

CHAMPAGNE DELAMOTTE

Le Mesnil sur Oger depuis 1760



BOTTLE SERVICE





there inevitably will be an "oh, hell" moment during the holidays at some point before guests arrive. But with a bit of advance planning, and, crucially, by making a big batch of cocktails a few days ahead, you can throw a great, chaosfree happy hour-and enjoy it, too.

Choosing the right kinds of cocktails to batch and storing them properly is key. Not all cocktails can be premade equally. "Alcohol doesn't freeze, but mixers do," says Vancouverbased bartender Kaitlyn Stewart. "Any batched drink that is primarily spirit-forward, like a martini, Negroni, or Manhattan, can easily be stored in the freezer." Stewart's Campfire Manhattan (recipe at right) and her Spiced Negroni (recipe p. 55) can be made as far as a month ahead and kept chilled until you need them.

affect a cocktail's flavors and textures: "Any drink that is mixer-heavy, like a margarita or punch, should be stored in the fridge, not the freezer," says Stewart. And while cocktail ingredients often have more longevity than, say, the dairy you're mixing into mashed potatoes, some last longer than others. "Fresh citrus juice is ideal for making drinks, but it does have a shelf life," says Stewart. As citrus juices oxidize, they lose their fresh, punchy flavors; if you make batched cocktails with them, enjoy them within a week. That said, you can still make Stewart's Rosemary Cranrita (a wintry riff on a margarita, recipe p. 54) and most of her zippy Holiday Spritz (recipe p. 55) several days ahead of time-just keep them in the fridge, not the freezer.

ACTIVE 15 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR

smoky, this spin on a classic Manhattan gets savory depth from amaro and warming sweetness from cinnamon syrup and rye whiskey. A duo of bitters adds complexity, and topping off the martini glass with a toasted marshmallow adds a sweet and playful note.

- 2 cups (16 oz.) rye whiskey (such as Bulleit Rye)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (4 oz.) amaro (such as Amaro Montenegro)
- 2 Tbsp. cinnamon syrup
- 8 dashes cherry bitters (such as Fee Brothers)
- syrup, and bitters to a 4-cup swing-top bottle or jar. Shake well to combine, about 10 seconds. Store in freezer until well chilled, about 45 minutes.
- 2. Place each marshmallow on a 4-inch skewer. Using a handheld kitchen torch or burner on a gas range, toast marshmallows.
- 3. Remove cocktail from freezer, and shake bottle or jar to recombine. Divide cocktail evenly among 8 chilled martini glasses. Garnish each with a toasted marshmallow. -KAITLYN STEWART, @LIKEABLE COCKTAILS, VANCOUVER

MAKE AHEAD Cocktail can be made through step 1 and stored in the freezer for up to 1 month.



YOU NEVER
FORGET
YOUR FIRST
FRENCH KISS.

A MOMENT WORTH SAVORING

Bursting with anticipation and passion, your first sip of Les Fumées Blanches is a kiss you'll always remember. Uniquely crafted by my family's fourth generation of winemakers, this Sauvignon Blanc offers a distinct profile with a beautiful balance of acidity and fruit expression. It's decadent, satisfying, and memorable. Another thing you'll never forget.

-François Lurton

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MIN; SERVES 8

A classic margarita takes a wintry spin with tart cranberry and woodsy rosemary. This cocktail can be served from a pitcher, but shaking each drink over ice froths and chills the cocktail. To serve frozen, add ingredients to a blender, and process with ice.

ROSEMARY SIMPLE SYRUP

- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- cup water
- 3 (4-inch) rosemary sprigs

COCKTAIL

11/2 cups (12 oz.) blanco tequila (such as Don Julio)

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (4 oz.) orange liqueur (such as Cointreau)
- 1/2 cup fresh lime juice (from 6 limes), plus lime wedge, for rimming glasses
- 1/2 cup Rosemary Simple Syrup
- 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp. kosher salt
- fresh rosemary sprigs, for garnish, plus 4 leaves for rim
- 24 cranberries, for garnish
- 1. Make the rosemary simple syrup: Stir together sugar, 1/2 cup water, and rosemary in a small saucepan. Bring to a gentle simmer over

- is syrupy and rosemary has wilted, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool completely, about 20 minutes. (If making ahead of time, remove rosemary sprigs, and store syrup in an airtight container in the refrigerator.)
- 2. Make the cocktail: Stir together tequila, cranberry juice, orange liqueur, lime juice, and rosemary simple syrup in a large pitcher. Stir well, about 20 seconds. Store in refrigerator until well chilled, about 45 minutes.
- 3. Stir together sugar and salt in a small bowl until combined. Using your fingers, rub rosemary leaves into sugar mixture until fragrant and oils release,

- 4. Remove tequila mixture from refrigerator. Rub rim of a rocks glass with lime wedge; dip into sugar mixture. Fill with ice; set aside. Pour 1/2 cup cocktail into a shaker filled with ice; shake until frosty, about 15 seconds. Strain into prepared rocks glass.
- **5.** Place a rosemary sprig in your palm; clap your hands until rosemary is fragrant. Place in glass with 3 cranberries. Repeat with remaining cocktails and garnishes. —KAITLYN STEWART, @LIKEABLE COCKTAILS, VANCOUVER

MAKE AHEAD Cocktail can be made through step 2 up to 2 days in advance and stored in the refrigerator.



SERVES 8

This drink is what happens when you combine the best parts of a French 75, a mimosa, and an Aperol spritz. The ultimate brunch cocktail, the Holiday Spritz is tangy and citrusy with delightful effervescence from the sparkling wine.

1 cup fresh orange juice (from 3 large oranges)

- ½ cup (4 oz.) Aperol
- 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice (from 2 large lemons)
- cup 1:1 simple syrup
- cups (16 oz.) dry sparkling wine (such as Mionetto Prosecco), chilled, divided
- 8 orange slices, for garnish

1. Add orange juice, gin, Aperol, lemon juice, and simple syrup to a large pitcher. Stir well to

chilled, about 45 minutes.

2. Remove from refrigerator, and stir well. Divide cocktail evenly among 8 ice-filled wineglasses. Top each with 1/4 cup sparkling wine, and garnish with an orange slice. —KAITLYN STEWART, @LIKEABLE COCKTAILS, VANCOUVER

MAKE AHEAD Cocktail can be made through step 1 up to 2 days in advance. To serve, top with sparkling wine.

Spiced Negroni

ACTIVE 30 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 15 MIN, PLUS 12 HR INFUSING SERVES 8

Made with warming winter spices, this bittersweet Negroni has earthy aromas with a touch of citrus. Add a splash of sparkling wine for a play on a Negroni sbagliato.

SPICE-INFUSED GIN

- 1 cup (8 oz.) gin (such as Tanqueray)
- 1 (4-inch) cinnamon stick
- 1 whole clove
- 1 whole star anise

COCKTAIL

- 1 cup (8 oz.) Spice-Infused Gin
- 1 cup (8 oz.) sweet vermouth (such as Martini & Rossi Rosso)
- 1 cup (8 oz.) Campari
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 cup (8 oz.) dry sparkling wine, chilled, divided (optional)
 - Orange slices and ground cinnamon, for garnish
- 1. Make the spice-infused gin: Stir together gin, cinnamon stick, clove, and star anise in an airtight container. Let stand at room temperature until gin is infused, about 12 hours.
- 2. Make the cocktail: Pour spice-infused gin through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a large pitcher; discard solids. Add sweet vermouth, Campari, and 3/4 cup water; stir well until combined, about 20 seconds. Store in refrigerator until well chilled, about 45 minutes.
- 3. Remove cocktail from refrigerator, and stir well to recombine. Divide cocktail evenly among 8 ice-filled rocks glasses. Add 2 tablespoons sparkling wine to each glass, if desired. Top each cocktail with an orange slice dusted with ground cinnamon. -KAITLYN STEWART, @LIKEABLE COCKTAILS, VANCOUVER

MAKE AHEAD Cocktail can be made through step 2 in advance and stored in the freezer for up to 1 month.

WHAT TO DRINK NOW

The Ultimate **Holiday Wine Guide** 31 perfect bottles for Thanksgiving and beyond

By Ray Isle

THERE ARE THREE THINGS that are certain in life: death, taxes, and the fact that if you are a wine writer, you will write "the best wines for Thanksgiving" columns. I certainly have. Over the years, I have suggested an alarming number of options, partly because "wine to go with turkey" is sort of a nonstarter-turkey, being one of the milder of our feathered (and roasted) friends, goes with darn near everything. So, to that end, in the pages of Food & Wine, I have so far recommended Syrah (odd); bargain Bordeaux (go figure); Riesling (I continue to fight!); wines to go with everything on the table other than turkey; lighter-bodied wines; sommelier picks; budget bottles; magnums (why not); Zinfandel (America's grape, even though it originally came from Croatia); and finally, pairing wine with the guests rather than the food. This latter suggestion I still think holds weight-your humorless great-aunt Alice does not want a natty Loire white that smells like a horse saddle, nor does your nephew Noah, he of the tats and piercings, want an old-school buttery Chard with his vegan-bird-substitute thing. What does all this amount to?

Well. I'm tempted at this point to suggest that the wisest course is simply to buy delicious wines by the case about a week before Thanksgiving so that you have an ample supply on hand straight through until January 2. In fact, that is what I'm going to do: The holidays create enough stress, with all the entertaining, present-buying, turkey-deep-frying, belligerent-uncle-mollifying, and whatnot. Lower what stress you can. Don't shop for wine last minute. Instead, seek out some of the suggestions here, buy more than one bottle (ideally 12, because you'll typically get a discount), read my list of "Holiday Wine Do's and Don'ts" (p. 58), and make sure some relative's child didn't set off with your corkscrew in pursuit of the cat. You'll be good to go.

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A bargain, of course, is relative. For Elon Musk, purchasing a \$6,000 bottle of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, for example, would be pocket change. For normal F&W readers—as far as we know, Musk is not one—great bottles that hover around \$20 (or less) seem about right, like the following.

2022 RAEBURN SONOMA COUNTY CHARDONNAY (\$20)

This white will be a crowdpleaser for fans of classic California Chardonnay. It's rich and luscious for sure, its ripe pear-melon flavors filled out with vanilla-oak notes, but there's enough acidity here to frame those flavors effectively.

The name is a play on words—"essay" as in "S.A." as in South Africa, where this wine hails from-but the wine itself is no joke. A citrusy, lightly savory blend of Chenin Blanc, Viognier, and Roussanne, it's a total steal at this price.

2023 A COROA GODELLO (\$22)

Godello is the signature grape of northwestern Spain's Valdeorras region, and A Coroa's version is a benchmark and a bargain as well. This is a medium-bodied but super-crisp white, its citrus flavors edged with fresh herb accents.

ASPROLITHI (\$19)

The impressively talented Theodora Rouvali makes this stunner of a white from mountain vineyards planted with the Greek Roditis grape. It's crisp and minerally, full of lightly herbal citrus and melon flavors, great with a Greek salad ... or roast turkey.

2022 TATOMER HINTER DER MAUER WHITE (\$22)

Graham Tatomer makes some of California's finest Rieslings from his home in California's Central Coast, but this largely Grüner Veltliner white is equally impressive. It's so lively it bounds across your palate, full of energetic nectarinepear flavor.

photography by VICTOR PROTASIO FOOD&WINE NOVEMBER 2024



South Africa's De Wetshof winery uses no oak on this perennial great-deal Chardonnay. Think golden apples and lime zest, with crisp minerality—in essence, a bright, Southern-hemisphere nod to Chablis.

2023 LE GALANTIN BANDOL ROSÉ (\$27)

The Pascal family farms 75 acres of organic vineyards in Bandol and from them makes this complex, nectarine-scented rosé. It's fuller-bodied than those from other Provençal appellations—ideal for Thanksgiving dinner, in other words. This Argentinean red's hints of black tea and forest floor can't help but suggest late fall, and its plummy fruit and firm tannins beg for something cooked low and slow—a smoked turkey, maybe, or a classic pot roast.

2021 BADENHORST FAMILY WINES SECATEURS RED (\$19)

South African winemaking star Adi Badenhorst's affordable Secateurs line of wines always seems to overdeliver; in the 2021 vintage, this spicy, savory blend of Shiraz, Grenache, and Cinsaut is a particular standout.

This California red is a kind of muscle-car interpretation of Cabernet: powerful and not exactly subtle, but a whole lot of fun. It's rich and ripe, with black currant fruit, toasty oak, and enough tannins to give it structure.

2020 ST. FRANCIS SONOMA COUNTY OLD VINE ZINFANDEL (\$23)

Fruit from 50- to 100-yearold vineyards in Sonoma County goes into this ebulliently fruity California red. It tastes like spiced boysenberries with a dash of cracked black pepper, and though it's a big wine, it's beautifully balanced. There's surprising elegance here for such an affordable Cabernet. The blueberry and blackberry flavors are relatively restrained, though they gain richness with each sip; light black-pepper notes add complexity.

2023 LIOCO INDICA RED TABLE WINE (\$25)

Lioco's Indica is one of those shape-shifting reds that tastes equally good either at normal temperature or chilled down in the fridge. It smells of violets and red berries and is light- to mediumbodied with fine-grained, supple tannins.

2021 RAÚL PÉREZ ULTREIA SAINT JACQUES (\$25)

Spanish wine star Raúl Pérez's basic Bierzo red is one of the great bargains in the wine world. Made from the Mencía grape, it's earthy and darkberried, with hints of olive. Drink it now, or cellar it for up to 10 years if you like.



PINOT NOIR

Oddly, I have never in all my years at *Food & Wine* written a column about Pinot Noirs for holiday meals, though by general affirmation Pinot Noir is the most versatile red grape around. Perhaps a contrarian streak in my personality is to blame. (My wife would say, "And we are surprised by this?") Anyway, about time: Here are eight great options.

2022 HAHN FOUNDER'S PINOT NOIR (\$16)

Family-owned Hahn Wines, located in California's Santa Lucia Highlands just inland from Monterey, makes this eminently quaffable, medium-weight Pinot; it's full of appealingly ripe black-cherry fruit.

2022 STOLLER WILLAMETTE VALLEY PINOT NOIR (\$25)

Brambly cherry flavors and soft tannins make this Oregon Pinot distinctly enticing. The Stoller family got their start in Oregon raising turkeys; conveniently for wine lovers, they shifted their attention toward grapes in 1988.

2023 CLOUDLINE WILLAMETTE VALLEY PINOT NOIR (\$23)

Domaine Drouhin Oregon's second label, Cloudline, is a reliable source for elegant Willamette Valley Pinot Noir at a modest price; the 2023, fragrant with wild berry and fresh herb notes, is a case in point.

2022 BANSHEE SONOMA COUNTY PINOT NOIR (\$30)

Transparently ruby in hue, this Sonoma Pinot from rising star winemaker Alicia Sylvester is bright and tangy, its red berry fruit enriched by subtle vanilla and spice notes from aging in French oak barrels (15% new).

2022 ELK COVE VINEYARDS WILLAMETTE VALLEY ESTATE PINOT NOIR

(\$34)

Elk Cove, founded in 1974, was part of the first wave of ambitious winemaking in the Willamette Valley. This spicy, cranberry-cherry-rich estate cuvée is a great intro to their style.

2022 CROSSBARN SONOMA COAST PINOT NOIR (\$40)

Paul Hobbs got his start with Cabernet, but Pinot Noir was among the varieties he released for the first vintage of his winery back in 1991. Over 30 years later, this luscious yet focused red is a testimony to his talents.

2022 HUNDRED SUNS OLD EIGHT CUT WILLAMETTE VALLEY PINOT NOIR (\$35)

Husband-and-wife team Grant Coulter and Renée Saint-Amour's Old Eight Cut cuvée has vibrant raspberry-pomegranate flavors that float by, leaving hints of dried sage on the lengthy finish.

2021 PATZ & HALL SONOMA COAST PINOT NOIR (\$45)

Winemaker James Hall is a longtime Pinot expert, mostly concentrating on elegant single-vineyard cuvées. But this regional bottling is a standout, with a silky texture, juicy raspberry fruit, and plenty of complexity.

HOLIDAY WINE DO'S AND DON'TS

DO

- Buy wine by the case. You'll usually get a discount (10% is common), and unlike steaks or shrimp, unused wine doesn't go bad. Save it for the next party.
- Consider screw-top bottles for affordable party wines. They're super-quick to open, and you won't spend valuable hosting time trying to remember where you set down the corkscrew.
- **Know** your audience. Even if you love weird, skin-contact white wines, your beloved, white Zinloving grandmother does not. Holidays are for making people happy, not educating them about your personal taste.
- Rent wineglasses for big parties. They get delivered before the party, they get picked up afterward, and you don't have to wash them (though some companies have a "return dirty" fee).
- •Offer nonalcoholic options, ideally something more interesting than water.

DON'T

- Go crazy worrying about pairing specific wines to specific dishes. It's a holiday party, not a dinner for wine collectors.
- Forget to chill the Champagne, unless you want to spray your guests/table/the dog with warm Champagne. Icy-cold bottles won't foam over.
- Worry about serving bottles that guests bring. A bottle someone brought is a gift, not an obligation. (So if you bring wine, don't get bent out of shape if your host doesn't serve it.)
- Run short. For dinner parties, take the number of guests and divide by two to get the number of bottles you need (assuming two glasses of wine per person, which is standard). But buy a few extra bottles, just in case.

CHILLING TIMES For cold white wine (or bubbles), this is what it takes: 90 minutes in the fridge, 45 minutes in the freezer, 25 minutes in ice, or 20 minutes (or less) in ice and water. GRATIEN & MEYER 2018 JUVÉ & CAMPS **RESERVA DE LA FAMILIA CAVA GRAN RESERVA BRUT NATURE** Juvé & Camps is one of the great names in Cava, still family-owned after almost 250 years. Its golden-hued, flagship bottling is made from organic grapes and suggests ripe apples, springtime flowers, and toasted nuts. PIERRE SPARR CRÉMANT D'ALSACE **BRUT RÉSERVE** (\$25) Crémant is essentially

BARGAIN BUBBLES

Sparkling wine tends to cost a little more than still wine, or at least good sparkling does. But when the average bottle of actual Champagne is \$50 in a store, it's well worth noting that there are lots of great sparkling producers out there from other regions whose wines run roughly half as much. Stock up on the bottles here for every holiday party need. (Except where noted, all of these are nonvintage cuvées.)

the French term for traditional sparkling wines (the secondary fermentation occurs in the bottle) that are not from Champagne. Alsace's versions are well worth seeking out, like this green apple-scented blend of Pinot Blanc and Pinot Auxerrois.

BON VIVANT BRUT (\$20)

LEARN

A lively, fruity, happygo-lucky sparkling wine made with 60% Chardonnay and 40% Pinot Noir, Bon Vivant's basic California brut cuvée, suggestive of red apples and a little grapefruit peel, is an ideal choice for large holiday parties and toasting, from Thanksgiving on through the season.

SCHARFFENBERGER CELLARS BRUT EXCELLENCE (\$24)

Scharffenberger Cellars was early to the game in terms of Mendocino sparkling; it was founded in 1981. Today, it's owned by Louis Roederer of Champagne fame, and this brioche-scented, citrusy-savory sparkling wine draws on the house's lengthy experience.

DOMAINE BECHTOLD CRÉMANT D'ALSACE **EXTRA BRUT (\$26)**

Pear, tangerine, and golden apple flavors woven together with a little savory spice note define this excellent Crémant d'Alsace. It comes from a fourth-generation family-owned property west of Strasbourg, whose vineyards are farmed organically.

GRATIEN & MEYER CRÉMANT DE LOIRE BRUT (\$18)

Crémant de Loire, the sparkling wine of France's Loire Valley, has a history to rival Champagne's but prices that don't. This very dry sparkler, with its hints of dried pineapple and toast, is a stellar deal.

2023 AVINYÓ PETILLANT VI D'AGULLA

(\$24)

This unusual, very lightly sparkling wine from the Cava producer Avinyó is an alternative to traditional sparkling wines—a spritzy blend of Muscat de Frontignan, Macabeo, and Xarel-lo, it is vividly aromatic and perfect for drinking out of a porrón.

LANGLOIS CRÉMANT DE LOIRE BRUT RÉSERVE (\$25)

Langlois-Chateau, owned by the Champagne Bollinger group, farms about 175 acres of vineyards in the Loire Valley and from them makes this spot-on Crémant de Loire. It's super-fresh, suggestive of toasted bread and lemon zest, with a minerally finish.

J VINEYARDS & WINERY **CALIFORNIA CUVÉE**

(\$28)

J Winery is a benchmark name in California sparkling. Its most affordable cuvée is not actually available at the winery itself but is widely distributed throughout the U.S. Good thing, too—the toasty, fragrant mix of tropical and orchard fruit here is undeniably appealing.



TRAVEL





HEN YOU'VE REACHED the blink-and-you'll-miss-it village of Haast, you've nearly made it to The Craypot. The road that leads here, to one of New Zealand's most remote villages, meanders 86 miles along the South Island's western coast. It's a region thick with Jurassic forests, where ancient mānuka trees and silver ferns tower so untouched that the distance to the nearest gas station begins to scratch at the edge of your thoughts.

Haast was founded by German settlers searching for precious pounamu jade, but it's another prized resource that now brings venturers here, quite literally, to the end of the road. Where it finally terminates, succumbing to the wild terrain of the Westland, travelers will find The Craypot, in a red-orange trailer at water's edge, fresh crayfish tails hissing on the grill.

To grow up in Aotearoa, the Indigenous name for New Zealand, is to grow up with crayfish. Not to be confused with the North American freshwater creatures of the same name, these are clawless, spiny rock lobsters that, when pulled from antipodean waters, go by the name of crays. The sweet and salty flesh in their spiked tails makes for one of the island nation's largest and most expensive exports; it can sell overseas for \$100 per pound. That's a very good reason to come and visit the source, where crayfish are a common, even everyday affair, casually offered on neighborhood bistro menus and tossed on backyard grills. Kiwis tend to grow up spending their summers shoeless, ambling between beach and bach (locals' affectionate name for

a ramshackle summer home), diving for cray or leaving out pots to pull them from the waters. With few endemic land mammals here, the heart of the food system is seafood; the Māori, the original stewards of the land, call it *kaimoana*. And there's no better way to explore the South Island than through the simple pleasures of its rugged roadside cray shacks.

In the December summer, the smell of drying seaweed and garlic butter is carried in occasional flicks of breeze. Sitting at The Craypot's picnic tables overlooking Jackson Bay, it's easy to believe the Fiordland crested penguins living here might outnumber the 200-odd residents. Helmed until recently by sisters Dayna and Nicole Buchanan, the iconic shack found new stewardship under Joss and Spinner Smith. Keeping such a legendary place alive and well is no easy feat. Nevertheless, the Smiths have maintained the sort of simple magic you'd hope to find at the end of the world–sweet crayfish briskly steamed, finished with a quick touch to the grill, and served with lemon and butter.

Cut across the Otago region and you'll find The FishWife, nestled into a graveled jutting of Moeraki coast. It's a simple operation here, too. Two hand-painted containers and seating constructed from metal cray traps speak to the Pile family's generational connection to fishing. John Pile is a fourth-generation cray fisherman, and his partner, Nicky, takes customers' orders. They sell crays that, thanks to insignificant defects like a broken antenna, don't grade high enough for export—top-quality



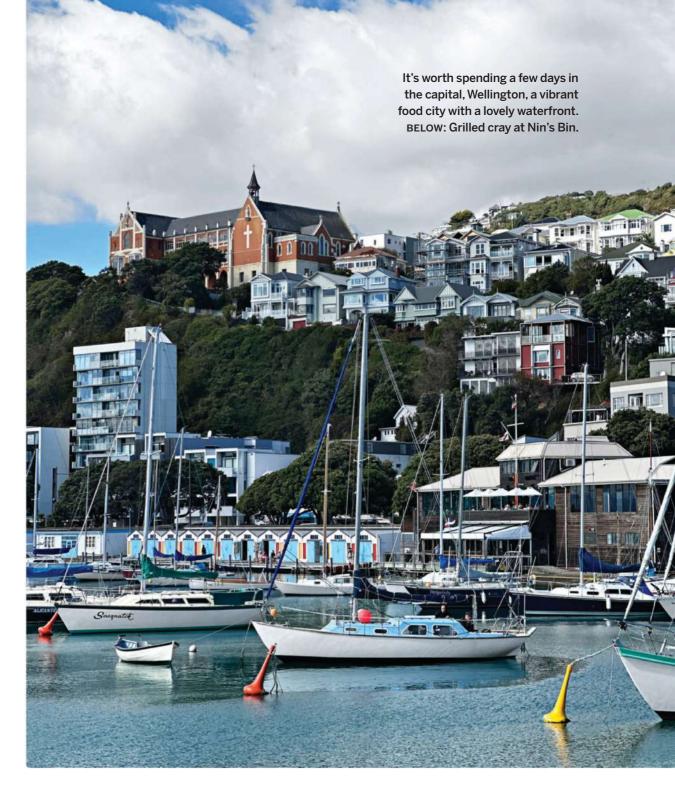
seafood, in other words, that can be sold affordably to the public. It's a road more fishermen are taking in order to provide kaimoana to their communities while increasing the sustainability of the industry at the same time.

That same mission has Claire Edwards of Tora Collective, which supplies some of the country's best restaurants, up and headed to the sea before sunrise. "What makes us unique and what we're most proud of is our catch-to-order model," Edwards explains. She and her crew fish only the exact number of crays ordered each day, helping

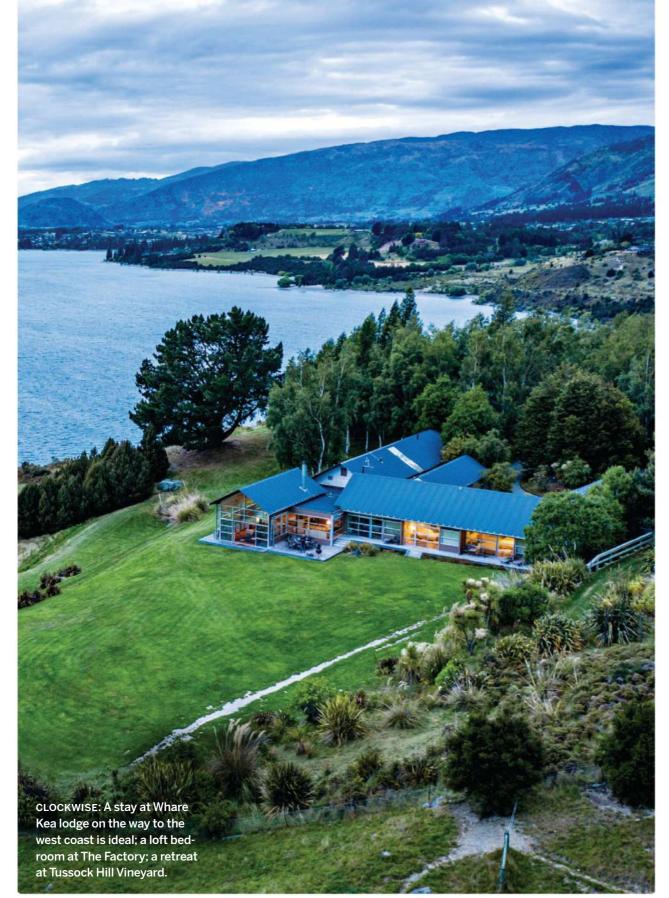
preserve the local population. And she notes an important factor that makes cray so special: "Our pristine marine environment is enriched by nutrient-dense currents—it gives an unparalleled flavor found nowhere else."

Edwards' go-to shack is north of The Craypot, in Kaikōura: Nin's Bin. The town, whose name translates to "eat crayfish," hosts a yearly nine-day crayfest and has no shortage of cray shacks—but none is as iconic as Nin's Bin. Run by third-generation crayfisherman Johnny Clark, the roadside trailer was first parked in front of a strip of coastal shoulder by his grandfather in 1977. Simply adorned with a hand-painted sign advertising the day's catch, Nin's Bin has seen little change over the years, save for a new coat of paint every couple of decades. Load up a plate with a whole cray brushed in rich garlic butter, and save room for whitebait fritters (needle-sized immature fish, fried golden in batter). Both are best enjoyed sitting on the beach as the sand manages to find its way into the nooks of your clothing.

Just down the road from the Kaikōura seal colony is The Kaikōura Seafood BBQ kiosk; here, crays are sold by weight. Pick one from the cooler, and bring it over to be steamed and served alongside a thick slice of crusty garlic bread. While your cray is cooking, grab a cold beer or glass of wine from next door and pull up a seat. "World famous" may be scrawled across the top of the kiosk, but as you're waiting for your paper plate of cray, taking in the secluded, bare-bones luxury of it all, you can't help but wish this place could remain your little secret.











GETTING THERE

Most international flights to New Zealand land in Auckland. From there, a short flight south to New Zealand's capital and its best food city, Wellington, puts you at the perfect starting point for a seafood-centric road trip to the South Island. Rent a car and take the scenic car-ferry ride to Picton, in the center of the stunning Marlborough Sounds, and meander your way down the coast to your first stop, Kaikōura. Many of these destinations are very remote, and the following suggestions make the perfect base for exploration along the road.

WHERE TO STAY

QT, WELLINGTON

The trendy QT Wellington hotel reflects the modern, eclectic vibe of New Zealand's capital city. It's just a short walk to buzzy Cuba Street, so you're perfectly positioned to explore the city's coolest wine bars, vintage shops, and restaurants. (Rooms from \$174, qthotels.com/wellington)

THE FACTORY, KAIKŌURA

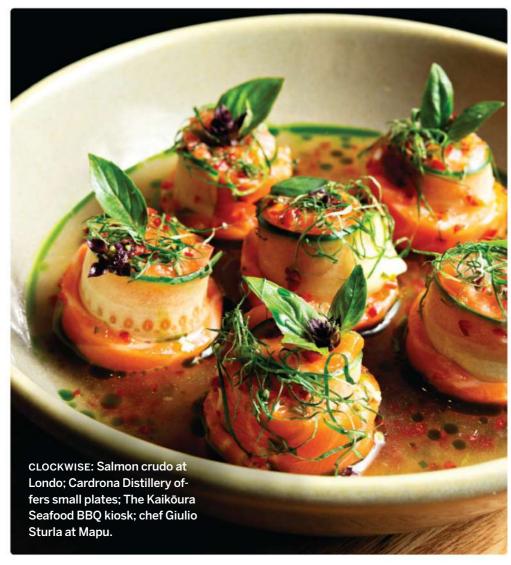
Housed in the old Hapuku Co-operative Dairy, The Factory is rich with rustic Kiwi charm and history. Built in 1910, each space connects you to the old way of New Zealand life. However, it's the Loft House that offers a modernized kitchen and amenities for the ideal mix of authentic farmhouse and contemporary comfort. (Rooms from \$330, thefactorykaikoura.co.nz)

TUSSOCK HILL VINEYARD RETREATS, CHRISTCHURCH

Nestled among the vines just outside Christchurch proper, these individual pods, constructed of sleek glass and wood, each with its own outdoor bathtub, are the perfect touch of luxury after a day on the road. (Rooms from \$212, tussockhill .co.nz)

WHARE KEA, WĀNAKA

At the edge of a pristine glacial lake in the central Otago wine region, Wānaka makes the perfect base for setting out to Jackson Bay or Dunedin. For a view of the lake and surrounding alps in all their glory, it's hard to beat this lodge, with its glass-fronted living room and kitchen. (Lodge from \$2,938, for up to 6 people, wharekealodge.com)









WHERE TO EAT & DRINK

SUPRA, WELLINGTON

Chef Thom Millott, formerly of the highly acclaimed Sydney wine bar Poly, shines at this newly opened spot. Vinyl records and a single charcoal oven set the tone at the intimate chef's counter, where Millott cooks prawn toast, burntonion soup, and lamb rissole rolls, all over fire. (suprarestaurant.co.nz)

THE KAIKŌURA SEAFOOD BBQ, KAIKŌURA

On the fringes of town toward the seal colony, pull up to this shack and take your pick from crays, shrimp, white-bait, or pāua (abalone) fritters, then pick up a cold beer or wine from the kiosk next door, Charli's Seaside Refreshments. (facebook.com/thekaikouraseafoodbbq)

NIN'S BIN, KAIKŌURA

A local fixture since the 1970s, this retro roadside trailer demands a lunch stop of grilled crays with your toes in the sand; or buy a steamed, chilled cray to take back to your lodgings for a fancy supper. (ninsbin.co.nz)

LONDO, CHRISTCHURCH

This is the sort of locally focused, small-plates spot every town needs. The emphasis is on natural wine and the region's best producers; plates like green-lipped mussel escabeche with green tomato, New Zealand kingfish with local wasabi, and pāua XO pappardelle have made this hip bar a mainstay. (instagram.com/londo.bar)

MAPU TEST KITCHEN, LYTTELTON

Chef Giulio Sturla is doing something special at Mapu Test Kitchen, just south of Christchurch. With his focus on transforming indigenous ingredients (including Tora Collective's pristine cray, pāua, and sea urchin) into a tasting menu for just a handful of diners each evening, this experience alone is worth the entire trip. (mapu.co.nz)

THE FISHWIFE, MOERAKI

At this simple shack, the Pile family dishes up fish-and-chips and crayfish with a focus on sustainability, cooking up crays that aren't considered picture-perfect enough for the export market but that are still delicious for locals and road trippers alike. (facebook.com/moerakifishwife)

CARDRONA DISTILLERY, WĀNAKA

Visit this alpine distillery, known for producing some of the highest-quality whiskey around, to see how the grain is mashed, distilled, and matured before settling in for a tasting of spirits like the Growing Wings single malt solera or an Otago Pinot cask–aged tipple. (cardronadistillery.com)

THE CRAYPOT, JACKSON BAY

At this remote outpost at the end of the earth on the South Island's western coast, cooks sling garlic-smothered grilled crays from a bright redorange shack right by the water. (thecraypotnz.com)





each year arouses more ambition and anxiety in eager cooks than all the others combined. We put so much stock in our Thanksgiving dreams, hoping to impress family and friends with our homemade feast. The good news is that with a few good strategies, those dreams can come true—stress-free.

First, know that you don't have to make everything from scratch. Sure, if you want to, you can, and you'll find delicious inspiration throughout this issue of Food & Wine. But it's also smart to buy some great rolls from a local bakery or cranberry relish from your favorite deli. (Or go with the jellied slice-and-serve stuff that you know everyone wants anyway.) If you have time to prepare a signature cocktail to greet your guests, great. If not, rest assured that cold bubbly is a fantastic whistlewetter. (For recommendations for either, turn to p. 51.)

As for the meat of the meal, we've got you covered with the five recipes here. Each is carefully constructed to head off issues by anticipating and troubleshooting them before they arise. Worried about everything being ready at the same time? Our recipes can be prepared ahead of time to make that happen easily. Anxious about gluey potatoes? Our fail-proof version is guaranteed to be creamy. Nervous that your piecrust will shrink? We share all the tips to prevent that—and also offer fixes on the off chance that it still happens. And perhaps the best part of all is that our Thanksgiving lessons don't just apply to Turkey Day: They can be used to make mealtimes easier, smoother, and more delicious all year round.

By Ann Taylor Pittman

Photography by Chris Simpson



FOOD STYLING: MARGARET MONROE DICKEY; PROP STYLING: AUDREY DAVIS

TAME THE TURKEY

The three secrets to evenly cooked, perfectly seasoned, crispy-skinned turkey are spatchcocking, dry-brining, and proper roasting. Bonus: These techniques work great for weeknight chicken, too.

KEY TIPS

SPATCHCOCK FOR SUCCESS

Think of spatchcocking as turning a 3D turkey into a 2D one. It involves butterflying the bird so that it's splayed out and lies flat.

BENEFITS: First, it cooks the bird much more quickly—in less than an hour and a half. Because all the meat is on the same plane and is equally exposed to the heat, it cooks more evenly—no more breast meat overcooking as the thighs struggle to get done. And with all the skin on top of the bird, the entirety of it becomes wonderfully crisp. Finally, a spatchcocked bird takes up less vertical space, so you can accommodate more dishes on the other oven rack.

HOW TO DO IT: Turn the bird upside down so the backbone is facing up. Using heavy-duty poultry shears, cut along either side of the backbone to remove it. Turn the turkey over, breast side up, and press down firmly on the center of the breastbone until it cracks and the bird lies flat.

DRY-BRINE IT AHEAD

Dry-brining means salting and seasoning the turkey and then allowing it to rest.

BENEFITS: It's easier and less messy than wet brining, but it achieves the same result—juicy, well-seasoned meat. It also yields crispier skin.

HOW TO DO IT: Combine salt and seasonings, and rub under and over turkey skin. Refrigerate, uncovered, for 24 hours.

ROAST IT RIGHT

LET IT SIT: Make sure to let the turkey rest at room temperature for an hour before roasting. You don't want it going into the oven fridge-cold.

TEST THE FIT: Before you turn the oven on, test-fit the pan (with the turkey on it) to see exactly where you need to arrange the oven racks.

TAKE ITS TEMP: Use a digital probe (leave-in) thermometer so you don't have to open the oven to check the turkey's temperature. Insert it in the meaty part of the thigh, making sure the tip doesn't hit bone and doesn't go all the way through.

LET IT REST: Let the bird sit for 30 minutes to allow the juices to settle before carving.

- 2 large celery stalks, coarsely chopped (about 1 cup)
- 6 Tbsp. unsalted butter (3 oz.), softened
- 1 Tbsp. toasted sesame oil
- 1. Pat turkey dry using paper towels; place turkey, breast side down, on a cutting board. Using kitchen shears, cut along either side of backbone to separate backbone from turkey. Discard backbone, or reserve for making stock. Flip turkey breast side up. Using the heels of your hands, firmly press down against breastbone until it cracks and turkey flattens. Arrange turkey breast side up on a wire rack, and place rack inside an 18- x 13-inch rimmed baking sheet; tuck wing tips underneath turkey. Loosen turkey skin from breast, thighs, and drumsticks by sliding your fingers underneath the skin. Stir together salt, ginger, and white pepper in a small bowl. Rub two-thirds of the salt mixture (about 21/2 tablespoons) evenly beneath skin of breast, thighs, and drumsticks; rub remaining salt mixture (about 1 tablespoon) over wings and skin of breast, thighs, and drumsticks. Refrigerate, uncovered, for 24 hours.
- 2. Remove turkey from refrigerator; let stand at room temperature for 1 hour. Arrange onions, carrots, and celery in bottom of a second rimmed baking sheet. Place turkey on an oven-safe wire rack, and set over vegetables on baking sheet.
- **3.** Preheat oven to 450°F with oven rack in middle position. Stir together butter and sesame oil in a small bowl until thoroughly combined. Rub 2 to 3 teaspoons butter mixture over wings, and rub remaining butter mixture underneath turkey skin and over breast, thighs, and drumsticks.
- 4. Roast turkey in preheated oven until an instant-read thermometer inserted into center of thigh registers 185°F, breast registers 155°F, and skin is crispy and golden brown, 1 hour to 1 hour and 10 minutes. Tent turkey using aluminum foil during last 15 minutes of roasting if skin begins to get too dark. Remove turkey; let stand 30 minutes before carving. —ANN TAYLOR PITTMAN

MAKE AHEAD Turkey can be cooled completely to room temperature and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

WINE A structured Barbera d'Alba: 2021 Cascina Fontana

Sesame-Ginger Spatchcocked Turkey

ACTIVE 25 MIN; TOTAL 2 HR 55 MIN, PLUS 24 HR CHILLING SERVES 12

This roast turkey is juicy, with incredibly crisp and flavorful skin. Two-time James Beard Award—winning recipe developer and cookbook author Ann Taylor Pittman rubs the meat beneath the skin with dried ginger, salt, and white pepper for an overnight dry-brine that seasons and promotes moist, tender meat. Spatchcocking saves time and allows the turkey to cook evenly. Butter and toasted sesame

oil bring a nutty, burnished finish. Onions, carrots, and celery in the bottom of the roasting pan add flavor to the drippings and prevent them from scorching. (Drippings can be used to make Super-Savory Turkey Gravy, recipe p. 71.)

- 1 (12-lb.) whole fresh turkey
- 3 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 2 tsp. ground ginger
- 11/2 tsp. ground white pepper
- 2 medium-size yellow onions, coarsely chopped (about 3½ cups)
- 2 large carrots, coarsely chopped (about 1 cup)

TAKE THE GUESS-WORK OUT OF GRAVY

Using a made-ahead
beurre manié, a paste of
softened butter mixed
with flour, to thicken
and enrich this gravy
guarantees an easy time
on Thanksgiving.

IF YOU'RE ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE Who quails at making gravy, try thinking of it as a pan sauce—one that uses the drippings and browned bits from a turkey cooked over aromatics in a rimmed baking sheet (recipe p. 69) instead of from a skillet-seared steak. Once the turkey is done, build the sauce from the drippings. Release the fond (those browned bits) by pouring sherry into the sheet pan and scraping with a wooden spoon, then use that liquid as the backbone of the gravy. To keep things simple, use store-bought chicken stock to add volume to the gravy, and thicken and enrich it with beurre manié, a paste of softened butter mixed with flour that you can make well in advance. It's a technique you'll want to carry into future weeknight meals with pork, steak, or chicken.

KEY TIP

ADD OOMPH: We amp up our gravy with herbs, fortified wine, and oyster sauce, but any of these other ingredients can also rev up flavor in a gravy or pan sauce: balsamic or sherry vinegar, Dijon mustard, miso, olive or caper brine, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, minced anchovies or anchovy paste, MSG, Maggi seasoning, Marmite, or mushroom powder.





Super-Savory Turkey Gravy

ACTIVE 15 MIN; TOTAL 20 MIN SERVES 12

Thicken this velvety gravy with a beurre manié (butter blended with flour) for a simple way to make perfect, lump-free gravy.

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter (4 oz.), cut into cubes and softened
- ½ cup all-purpose flour (about 2½ oz.) Roast turkey drippings (such as from Sesame-Ginger Spatchcocked Turkey, recipe p. 69) (see Note)
- 1/4 cup dry sherry
- 3 to 3½ cups unsalted chicken stock
- 2 Tbsp. oyster sauce (such as Lee Kum Kee Premium or Megachef) (see Note)
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme, plus more for garnish
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, plus more for garnish
- 1. Toss butter with flour in a small bowl until butter is coated; mash and knead together using a small silicone spatula or your hands until well combined. Divide mixture into teaspoon-size pieces; set aside.
- 2. While turkey roasting pan or sheet pan is still hot, pour turkey drippings through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a 4-cup measuring cup. (Discard solids.) Add sherry to pan. Stir and scrape pan bottom using a wooden spatula to loosen any browned bits; add to drippings mixture, and let stand 5 minutes. Skim fat, and discard. Add stock to measuring cup to equal 4 cups.
- **3.** Pour drippings mixture into a medium saucepan; whisk in oyster sauce, chopped thyme, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil over medium-high. Reduce heat to medium, and maintain a simmer. Gradually whisk in butter-flour mixture, a few pieces at a time, whisking until butter mixture melts completely before adding more, about 3 minutes total. (Gravy should be thick enough to coat the back of a spoon.) Stir in chopped parsley. Serve garnished with additional thyme and parsley. —ANN TAYLOR PITTMAN

MAKE AHEAD Store butter-flour mixture from step 1 in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days or in the freezer up to 3 months; bring to room temperature before using. Store cooled gravy in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

NOTE Find oyster sauce at Asian grocery stores or online at sayweee.com. Any roast turkey drippings will work for this gravy.

RE-THINK YOUR MASH

The secret to the smoothest, fluffiest mashed potatoes? Start off with baked potatoes—and make them ahead of time.

THIS MAKE-AHEAD SPIN ON SPUDS saves you from boiling, straining, and mashing during the rush of all the other last-minute tasks. Our method is both fail-safe and foolproof: You are guaranteed success. It starts with baking the potatoes instead of boiling (see box below), beating them using a stand mixer, and refrigerating them for a day or two. Shortly before sitting down for the feast, you'll reheat them in the microwave-no jockeying for oven space! This approach makes it easier to sync all the elements of the holiday meal so everything's ready at once, but it's helpful at any time of year.

KEY TIP

KEEP THEM DRY: The cause of gluey potatoes? Too much water. Starch granules exist inside all potato cells. In raw potatoes, these granules are hard and tightly packed. When you boil potatoes, the cells absorb water, and the starch granules swell and eventually burst, creating a sticky gel. When you agitate the potatoes, that gelled starch gets released. Overworking waterlogged potatoes is the kiss of death: You have more gel to begin with, and overly energetic mashing or churning releases more of it into your mash. Our technique of baking the potatoes helps to sidestep gluiness by keeping the spuds drier to begin with.





Creamy No-Fail Make-Ahead Mashed Potatoes

ACTIVE 10 MIN; TOTAL 1 HOUR SERVES 12

Baked russet potatoes are the key to these fluffy, smooth, make-ahead mashed potatoes. Keeping water content at a minimum by forgoing boiling and using russets for their fluffier, drier texture prevent the potatoes from becoming gluey. The tangy richness from crème fraîche and cultured butter makes these mashed potatoes wonderfully creamy even after being refrigerated for a few days and then reheated.

- 4 lb. russet potatoes (5 large potatoes)
- 11/3 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup salted cultured butter (such as Vermont Creamery) (4 oz.), plus more for serving
- 8 oz. crème fraîche, at room temperature
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh chives
- **1.** Preheat oven to 450°F. Pierce each potato a couple of times using a fork. Place potatoes directly on oven rack; bake until completely tender, 50 minutes to 1 hour.
- 2. During last 5 to 10 minutes of potato cooking time, heat cream and butter in a small saucepan on medium-low; cook until butter melts and mixture is very warm, about 5 minutes. Set aside, and keep hot.
- **3.** Working with 1 potato at a time while potatoes are still very hot, cut potato in half lengthwise. Hold potato halves using a towel or pot holder, and use a spoon to scoop out flesh into bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Repeat process with remaining potatoes. Mash potato flesh using a fork or potato masher until broken into small pieces. Beat on medium-low speed, and gradually increase mixer speed to medium, beating until smooth, about 1 minute.
- **4.** Remove bowl from stand mixer. Using a silicone spatula, gradually stir in hot cream mixture; stir in crème fraîche and salt until well combined. Sprinkle with chives, and top with pats of butter just before serving.

 —ANN TAYLOR PITTMAN

MAKE AHEAD Store cooled mashed potatoes in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat in the microwave (using a large microwave-safe bowl) until heated through.





PRE-ROAST THE VEGGIES

For a no-sweat side dish, roast your veggies ahead of time, marinate them in a punchy vinaigrette, and serve the result at room temperature. Repeat year-round.

THE BEST WAY to pull off a Turkey Day feast with ease is to make as much ahead as you possibly can. Our method for this vegetable side not only allows you to prepare it up to two days in advance but also requires no reheating. That's right—we serve our cauliflower side dish at room temperature and build in robust flavors to ensure it stays vibrant. First, we roast cauliflower and Romanesco at a high temperature to build in caramelized browned bits. Then we toss them in a zippy vinaigrette that's deliberately sharp and crisp so that it doesn't lose its oomph after chilling. You'll find that this technique works beautifully for year-round meal prep with other vegetables as well. (Summer squash is particularly lovely served this way.)

KEY TIPS

ROAST SMARTER

To ensure that the vegetables' rich flavor lasts over a couple of days in the fridge, follow these suggestions.

PREHEAT THE PAN: Start with a sizzling-hot sheet pan for more caramelization and richer flavor.

CREATE SURFACE AREA: Cut florets with some flat edges for more direct contact with the hot pan.

STAY IN TOUCH: Skip lining the pan; you want the vegetables to lie directly on the metal to encourage browning.

Roasted Cauliflower and Romanesco with Dijon Vinaigrette

ACTIVE 20 MIN; TOTAL 45 MIN SERVES 12

Embrace the idea that every vegetable side doesn't have to arrive to the table piping hot with this colorful cauliflower recipe. While still warm, dress the vegetables with a Dijon vinaigrette that's just sharp enough to offset their sweetness. You can serve this dish warm or cold, and it is ideal for making in advance.

- 1 medium head Romanesco, cut into medium florets (about 6½ cups)
- 1 medium head white cauliflower, cut into medium florets (about 6½ cups)
- 1 medium head orange cauliflower, cut into medium florets (about 6½ cups)
- 3 Tbsp. canola oil
- 13/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 tsp. black pepper, divided
- 31/2 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 3 Tbsp. minced shallot (about 1 large [2-oz.] shallot)
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped fresh thyme
- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 11/2 tsp. minced fresh rosemary, plus leaves for garnish
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- **1.** Preheat oven to 425°F with racks in top third and lower third positions; place a 18- x 13-inch rimmed baking sheet on each rack to preheat.
- 2. Toss together Romanesco and cauliflower in a very large bowl. Drizzle with canola oil, and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper; toss gently to coat. Remove baking sheets from oven; immediately divide cauliflower mixture between pans, spreading evenly, and return to oven. Roast at 425°F, without stirring, until vegetables are browned in spots and tender (rotate pans between top and bottom racks halfway through cooking time), 20 to 22 minutes. Cool on baking sheets for 10 minutes.
- **3.** Meanwhile, whisk together vinegar, shallot, thyme, mustard, rosemary, remaining ³/₄ teaspoon salt, and remaining ¹/₂ teaspoon pepper in a very large bowl; gradually whisk in olive oil. Gently toss in vegetables. Serve at room temperature.

 —ANN TAYLOR PITTMAN

MAKE AHEAD This dish can be cooled and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 days. Let stand at room temperature one hour before serving.



PERFECT YOUR PIE

All the tips and tricks for a tender, flaky, beautiful piecrust that doesn't shrink—and a delicious filling to go inside it

RELAX, YOU'VE GOT THIS. Making a pie (specifically a homemade piecrust) can be intimidating, but this recipe has you covered. Most of the intel is built into the recipe's careful instructions, but to the right are some points worth discussing in more detail.

KEY TIPS

MAKING THE DOUGH

COOL IT: Keep lard and butter very cold. For ice water, scoop from a bowl of water with lots of ice.

GO LIGHT: For a tender crust, use a light touch. Using a food processor will make you less likely to overwork the dough.

REST IT: Wrap and chill the dough for a couple of hours before rolling it out to allow the flour to fully hydrate.

ROLLING AND SHAPING

GO GENTLY: Pressing too hard as you roll can make the crust tough.

USE GLASS: Glass pie plates brown the bottom of the crust a little better.

NAIL THE LANDING: Roll dough, then gently lower onto pie dish. Do not stretch it (stretching leads to shrinkage)—let it drape itself. Don't trim it yet; let dough chill a few minutes in the pie plate to relax.

SHAPE THE EDGES: Trim edges a bit longer than the pie plate rim, then

fold the edges under and finish them as you prefer. Press the dough with fork tines to create a pattern, or flute by pinching dough around your finger.

CHILL AGAIN: After shaping edges, chill for a few minutes so dough can relax and set before baking.

BLIND BAKING

For wet, custard-type fillings, blind baking (baking the crust until it's golden and slightly crisp before the filling goes in) prevents a soggy crust.

LINE IT: Crumple parchment paper to make it more pliable, then use it to line the dough. Fill lined crust with pie weights or dried beans so dough presses against sides of dish.

BAKE IT: Blind bake for 15 minutes. Remove parchment and weights, then bake a few more minutes to dry the crust bottom.

BAKING THE PIE

START HOT: Jumpstart the filling at the temperature used for blind baking, then lower to finish. shield the edges: Fold a sheet of tinfoil in half and cut a semicircle from the middle; unfold and arrange over pie, centering open circle over filling. Loosely crimp foil edges to secure.

WHAT IF IT SHRINKS?

If, in spite of everything, the crust shrinks, add whipped cream, crumbled cookies, or chopped nuts around the edge of the pie to cover. Or slice the pie and set pieces on individual plates; the imperfection won't be noticeable that way.

Pumpkin-Cream Cheese Pie

ACTIVE 40 MIN; TOTAL 6 HR 25 MIN SERVES 8

This pie dough calls for butter and lard—the former gives rich flavor, and the latter ensures flakiness and tenderness. Orange liqueur and cardamom give the filling a bright, perfumed flavor, and a swirl of cream cheese filling enriches everything. This recipe makes 2 extra dough portions that you can freeze to use whenever you need a great versatile dough.

PIE DOUGH

- 4 cups all-purpose flour (about 17 oz.), plus more for dusting
- 1 tsp. table salt
- 3/4 cup cold unsalted butter (6 oz.), cut into cubes
- 3/4 cup cold lard (preferably leaf lard or Tenderflake) (6 oz.), cut into small cubes (see Note)
- ²/₃ cup ice water, plus more as needed

FILLING

- 2 large eggs
- 1 (15-oz.) can pumpkin
- 1/4 cup orange liqueur (such as dry Curação or Grand Marnier)
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. table salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp. ground cardamom
- 1 cup evaporated milk, divided
- 3/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar, divided
- 4 oz. cream cheese, softened
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

- 1. Make the pie dough: Process flour and salt in a food processor until combined, 2 to 3 pulses. Scatter butter and lard over top of flour mixture; pulse until fat pieces are the size of peas, 8 to 10 pulses. Drizzle ice water over surface of flour mixture; pulse until dough just starts to come together (do not let dough form a ball), adding additional water, 1 tablespoon at a time, as needed.
- **2.** Turn dough out onto a work surface; work dough together using your hands, kneading very lightly just until dough holds together. Divide dough into 3 equal portions (about 11½ oz. each). Pat each dough portion into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to 24 hours.
- 3. Turn 1 dough portion out onto a lightly floured surface. Gently roll into a 12-inch round, working from middle of dough outward and changing directions of rolling pin each time. Lift dough from work surface after every 2 to 3 rolls, adding a tiny bit more flour as needed to prevent sticking. Arrange dough in a 9-inch pie plate, fitting dough into bottom and up sides of pie plate without stretching. Trim dough to an even thickness around edge of pie plate. Fold edges under, and crimp, pressing edges lightly to adhere to rim of pie plate. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- **4.** Preheat oven to 400°F with rack in lower third position. Line chilled dough in pie plate with parchment paper, allowing excess to extend slightly over edges. Fill pie plate to the rim with pie weights or dried beans. Bake crust in preheated oven until edges are lightly golden and just set, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove parchment paper and pie weights; continue baking at 400°F until

- crust is lightly browned on bottom, 10 to 12 minutes. Cool crust completely, about 30 minutes. (Leave oven on.)
- 5. Make the filling: Whisk together eggs, pumpkin, liqueur, cinnamon, salt, ginger, cardamom, 3/4 cup evaporated milk, and 3/4 cup sugar in a large bowl until completely smooth. Place cream cheese in a medium bowl; beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until smooth, about 1 minute. Reduce speed to low; gradually add remaining 1/4 cup evaporated milk and remaining 2 tablespoons sugar until well combined and smooth, about 30 seconds. Add flour and vanilla, beating until combined, about 15 seconds. Pour pumpkin mixture into piecrust. Dollop cream cheese mixture over top. Gently swirl using a small spoon, scooping and lifting up some of the pumpkin filling to the top to help create a swirl. Bake at 400°F for 15 minutes. With pie still in oven, reduce oven temperature to 350°F; bake at 350°F until filling is set around the edges but still just a bit jiggly in the middle, 35 to 40 minutes. (Cover crust using aluminum foil if needed to prevent overbrowning.) Remove pie from oven, and cool completely on a wire rack, about 2 hours. -ANN TAYLOR PITTMAN

MAKE AHEAD The dough can be made through step 1 and stored, wrapped well, in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours. Transfer to a ziplock plastic bag to freeze for up to 2 months. Cooled pie can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

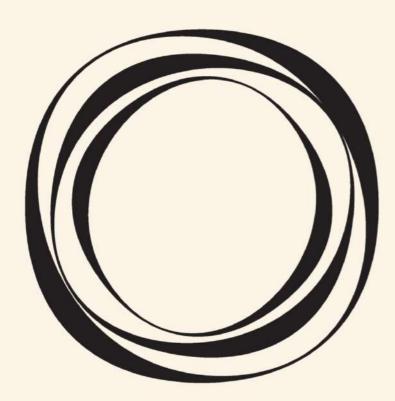
NOTE Find leaf lard, a quality, neutralflavored pig fat, at fatworks.com. While not leaf lard, Tenderflake lard is another neutral tasting, high-quality option. Find it at canadianfoodtousa.com.



TROM PANN TO ROASTED, EVERYDAY ONIONS DESERVE THEIR TURNING HER TURNING HER THEIR TH

BY CHERYL SLOCUM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS SIMPSON



ON SATURDAYS WHEN I WAS YOUNG, I'd often find my father in the kitchen, dicing a freshly peeled, starkly white onion. It was the ultimate topping for the pan-sizzled hot dogs he would serve placed diagonally on a slice of white bread along with a drizzle of mustard, the crisp, sweet, crunchy cubes popping pungently against the rich beef sausage. I marveled at the perfect horizontal and vertical knife cuts he'd make through each onion half. This precision vegetable butchery, he claimed, was Army-taught—his inevitable explanation for everything he knew how to do, and also probably untrue; he'd been a clerk during World War II, not a KP cook. But those tutorials on onion prep remain the basis of my continuing love for the everyday onion and its power to carry a dish forward with either bold intensity or subtle complexity.

Almost any time I cook, I need an onion. It's one of the essential ingredients that cooks lean on most. In cooking school, before almost anything else, you're taught to break down onions. (Of course, I already had my father's technique down pat.) Onions bring myriad aromas and nuanced flavor notes to dishes, among them crucial, umami-producing glutamates.

Archaeologists suggest that our reverence for onions began with foraged wild varieties, but thanks to five millennia of cultivation, most of us can now walk into a grocery store and choose our favorites from a bin, or fill a bag from the bounty on display at a farmers market. The character of those onions, though, is heavily influenced by the soil, climate, and sunlight they grow in. Sweet onions from the Southern U.S., such as Vidalia and Texas Sweets (short-day onions) need only 10 to 12 hours of daylight to fully develop, while many mild red and white varieties (intermediate-day), need 12 to 14 hours of sunshine. At the far end, Spanish yellow onions and late-summer Walla Wallas thrive under the heat, light, and corresponding photosynthesis from 14 or more sunny Northern-U.S. hours each day.

Open any general cookbook and you'll find recipes everywhere featuring onions in a supporting role, yet probably only a handful or two that bring this magical allium forward as the lead ingredient. That's a shame. Onions are shapeshifters: Their complex flavors sweeten and deepen as they are cooked but are just as enticing—if sharper—when raw. (I'm thinking back to those delicious diced bits atop my childhood hot dogs.)

In the following pages, we peel back the everyday onion's layers and reveal the best way to give them their central role—in recipes that celebrate how distinguished they can be in the spotlight, on their own.







HOW TO FRENCH ONION ANYTHING

Once you have a batch of Frenched Onions (recipe p. 83), you can put a French-onion spin on almost everything, from an upgraded everyday mac and cheese to specialoccasion French Onion-Stuffed Onions (recipe p. 83). Frenched onions begin with caramelizing, where sliced onions are cooked slowly to coax out their sugar so that they reach a deeper level of sweetness while still retaining a savory, oniony character. Add beef bouillon, dry sherry, and Gruyère cheese, and you get to the recognizable (and beloved) flavors of French onion soup. To get started, try these easy French onion-ified foods.

FRENCH ONION MAC AND CHEESE

Stir Frenched onions into your favorite mac and cheese recipe, and top it with buttered, torn sourdough bread right before you slide it into the oven to bake.

FRENCH ONION ROAST BEEF SLIDERS

Layer roast beef, Frenched onions, and Gruyère cheese between a split slab of sweet Hawaiian rolls. Brush tops of bread with melted butter, then cover well with foil. Bake at 350°F until the cheese melts; uncover and let cook a little longer until the top is toasted.

FRENCH ONION LOADED BAKED POTATOES

Pack your baked potato with Frenched onions, Gruyère cheese, and a sprinkle of fresh thyme. Then pop the potatoes under the broiler to get the cheese nice and melty. Before serving, add a dollop of sour cream—or crème fraîche, if you're feeling fancy.





French Onion-Stuffed Onions

ACTIVE 30 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 15 MIN SERVES 4

Stuffing an onion with more onion may seem like overkill—until you bite into this rich, creamy, savory dish. The onions, hollowed and packed with beefy caramelized Frenched Onions (recipe at right), release their juices as they bake and soak into the slices of sourdough bread that each onion sits on. Nutty Gruyère melts over the roasted onions for a fork-and-steak-knife version of French onion soup gratinée. Mild white onions work beautifully here, but you can also go with yellow or red onions for a wonderful, slightly sweeter result. Whichever onions you choose, this is an inviting dish that will turn heads at the table.

- 4 (about 12-oz.) white onions
- 1 cup beef stock
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper, plus more for garnish
- 1 cup Frenched Onions, warmed (recipe at right)
- 3/4 tsp. chopped fresh thyme, plus additional leaves for garnish
- 11/4 cups Gruyère cheese, shredded (about 5 oz.), divided
- 4 (3/4-inch-thick) slices rustic sourdough bread
- 1. Preheat oven to 450°F. Trim about ¼ inch from the root end and about 1 inch from the stem end of each onion. Peel onions, and remove outermost onion layer. Scoop out flesh from center of each onion using a small spoon to create a cavity about 1 inch deep, leaving about 2 onion layers intact around the sides. The base should be slightly thicker. Reserve onion flesh. Discard peels, trimmings, and the outer onion layer.
- **2.** Finely chop onion flesh. Spread 1½ cups chopped onion in a 9-inch square baking pan, and pour in beef stock. (Discard any remaining flesh, or reserve for another use.) Nestle hollowed onions, open end up, in pan; drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil, and sprinkle evenly with salt and pepper.
- **3.** Cover pan tightly with aluminum foil. Bake in preheated oven until hollowed onions are softened, about 20 minutes. Uncover, and continue baking until liquid in pan has almost completely evaporated and hollowed onions are tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove pan from oven. (Do not turn oven off.)
- **4.** Transfer hollowed onions to a paper towel–lined plate. Stir Frenched onions and thyme into onion mixture in pan. Season to taste with additional salt. Stuff each hollowed onion with 1 tablespoon Gruyère and about ½ cup Frenched onion mixture.

5. Place bread slices on a rimmed baking sheet; drizzle evenly with remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Top each slice with 1 stuffed onion. Sprinkle onions evenly with remaining 1 cup Gruyère, letting some spill onto bread. Bake at 450°F until Gruyère is melted and beginning to brown, 5 to 8 minutes. Garnish with thyme leaves and additional black pepper. Serve hot. —*PAIGE GRANDJEAN*

MAKE AHEAD Onions can be prepared through step 1 and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 day. Proceed with recipe as directed.

WINE A full-bodied, aromatic white: 2021 Domaine Zind-Humbrecht Alsace Pinot Blanc

Frenched Onions

PHOTO P. 81

TOTAL 1 HR; MAKES 11/4 CUPS

Take caramelized onions, punch them up with beef bouillon, and you've got a power-house ingredient that mirrors the comforting flavor of French onion soup. Use them to stuff whole onions (recipe at left), stir them into mac and cheese, layer them into roast beef sliders, and more. (See "How to French Onion Anything," p. 81.) Don't be tempted to add sugar, a faux pas sometimes employed to speed up the browning. Take your time, and let the onions' naturally high sugar content do all of the work. To make a double batch, use a second pan—the onions need plenty of surface area to work their magic.

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 lb. yellow onions (about 4 onions), thinly sliced
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1 to 2 Tbsp. water, as needed
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 Tbsp. dry sherry
- ½ tsp. beef bouillon paste (such as Better Than Bouillon Roasted Beef Base)
- **1.** Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium. Add onions; cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and starting to brown, about 20 minutes. Stir in salt and pepper. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until onions are very soft and dark golden, 30 to 40 minutes, stirring in 1 to 2 tablespoons water as needed if pan bottom gets too dark.
- **2.** Stir in butter, sherry, and beef bouillon paste. Cook, stirring often, until butter melts and sherry evaporates, about 2 minutes. —*PAIGE GRANDJEAN*

MAKE AHEAD Frenched onions can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or in the freezer up to 1 month. Thaw over low heat, stirring often.







Crispy Air Fryer Onion Rings

ACTIVE 45 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 10 MIN SERVES 6

These cornflake-crusted onion rings can be made in an air fryer or deep-fried either method creates a crisp golden crust embracing a tender ring of onion. Each cooking method has its own advantages: Air-frying offers convenience and no oil to dispose of, while deep-frying (see Note) provides a deep golden color and extra richness from the oil. To make sure the air-fryer version delivers the crisp crunch of a deep-fried version, double-dredge the onions. (If deepfrying, you need only dredge once.) Use a fork instead of your hands to dredge and bread the onions to ensure the delicate crust adheres well. Buttermilk helps neutralize the onions' sulfur content, giving them a sweeter bite.

- 2 large sweet onions, cut into ³/₄-inch-thick rounds
- 11/4 cups all-purpose flour (about 53/8 oz.), divided
- 1 cup whole buttermilk
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tsp. hot sauce
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. dry mustard
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 Tbsp. kosher salt, divided
- $2\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. onion powder, divided
- 11/4 tsp. paprika, divided
- 1/2 tsp. plus 1/8 tsp. black pepper, divided
- 2 cups very finely crushed cornflakes cerealCooking spray
- 1/4 tsp. MSG (optional)
- 1. Peel and remove outermost layer of onion rounds; separate the slices into individual rings. Discard the outermost layers and the innermost smaller rings smaller than 2 inches in diameter, or reserve for another use. Peel off and discard the translucent membrane located inside each ring.
- 2. Place ¾ cup flour in a shallow dish; set aside. In a second shallow dish, whisk together buttermilk, eggs, hot sauce, garlic powder, dry mustard, baking powder, 1 teaspoon salt, 2 teaspoons onion powder, 1 teaspoon paprika, ½ teaspoon black pepper, and remaining ½ cup flour until smooth. In a third shallow dish, stir together cereal and 1¼ teaspoons salt.
- **3.** Dredge the onion rings in flour; shake off excess flour, and transfer to a large plate. Working with 1 onion ring at a time, dip in buttermilk mixture. Using a

fork, turn onion ring until evenly coated, and lift out of buttermilk mixture, letting excess drip off. Repeat dredging process with flour and buttermilk mixture 1 more time. Transfer dredged onion ring to cereal mixture, turning and pressing gently to adhere; place on a baking sheet. Repeat process with remaining onion rings, flour, buttermilk mixture, and cereal mixture.

- **4.** Preheat air fryer to 375°F for 5 minutes. Coat all sides of onion rings generously with cooking spray. Working in batches, place onion rings in a single layer in air fryer basket, and cook until golden and crisp, 11 to 14 minutes, flipping after 8 minutes. Transfer to a plate, and repeat process until all onion rings are cooked.
- **5.** While onion rings cook, stir together MSG (if using), remaining ³/₄ teaspoon salt, remaining ¹/₄ teaspoon onion powder, remaining ¹/₄ teaspoon paprika, and remaining ¹/₈ teaspoon black pepper. Sprinkle hot onion rings with seasoning mixture. Serve hot. —*NICOLE HOPPER*

NOTE To deep-fry: Heat 2 inches of canola oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high to 350°F. Dredge onion rings once in flour, buttermilk mixture, and cereal mixture (no need to double-dredge). Working in batches, fry onion rings until golden brown and crisp, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a paper towellined plate to drain. Sprinkle seasoning mixture over hot onion rings immediately after frying.

Creamy Onion Soup

PHOTO P. 84

ACTIVE 25 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR SERVES 4

Simple, everyday ingredients—roasted yellow onions and garlic—meld with white wine and chicken stock for a luxurious soup that's largely hands-off. Heat and time in the oven do the work of mellowing the sharpness of the garlic and onions, drawing out their subtle, sweet notes. Deglazing the roasting pan with wine just as the onions start to brown will lift up the rich, caramelized bits and add depth to the soup. Blending the onions with chicken stock and finishing with heavy cream and a pat or two of butter take the soup from simple to sublime.

- 2 cups hand-torn (about ½-inch pieces) rustic sourdough bread
- 6 Tbsp. olive oil, divided, plus more for drizzling
- 13/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided, plus more to taste
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper, divided, plus more for garnish

- 1 garlic head
- 2 lb. yellow onions (about 4 onions), cut into 1-inch wedges
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1½ cups chicken stock, warmed, plus more as needed
- ½ oz. Parmesan cheese, finely grated (about ⅓ cup)
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed
- 1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss sourdough pieces with 3 tablespoons olive oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven until golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Transfer croutons to a small bowl; set aside. Wipe baking sheet clean. (Do not turn oven off.)
- 2. Cut off and discard top ½ inch of garlic head. Place garlic head, cut side down, and onion wedges on rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle evenly with remaining 3 tablespoons olive oil, and sprinkle with ¾ teaspoon salt and remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper. Roast at 400°F until onions and garlic are tender and just starting to brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Pour wine over onions. Continue roasting until liquid is mostly evaporated, about 5 minutes.
- 3. Squeeze softened garlic cloves into a blender using tongs; discard garlic skins. Transfer onions and remaining liquid on pan to blender. Add chicken stock, Parmesan, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt. Secure lid on blender, and remove center piece to allow steam to escape. Place a clean towel over opening. Process on medium-high speed until smooth, about 2 minutes. Decrease speed to medium-low. With blender running, slowly pour in cream. Add butter, a few pieces at a time, and blend until soup is very smooth and creamy, about 30 seconds. Thin soup to desired consistency with additional chicken broth, if desired. Season to taste with additional salt.
- **4.** Divide soup among serving bowls. Top with croutons; drizzle with additional olive oil, and garnish with additional black pepper. —PAIGE GRANDJEAN

MAKE AHEAD Soup can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat over low, stirring occasionally, until hot. Soup can also be frozen; however, do not add the cream and butter in step 3. Thaw before reheating, and stir in cream and butter right before serving.

WINE A balanced, classic California Chardonnay: 2020 Stonestreet Estate

Red Onion and Smoked Trout Tea Sandwiches

TOTAL 35 MIN; SERVES 12

These hors d'oeuvres are inspired by James Beard's favorite sandwich of onion between slices of buttered bread. In our party-ready recipe, smoked trout is stirred into a brightly seasoned cream-cheese-and-mayo base that becomes a perfect pairing for thinly sliced red onions. Raw red onions have a spicy bite that works beautifully with the rich spread, but if you wish to tone down their intensity, soak the sliced onion in cold water for 30 minutes. A coat of chopped parsley, dill, and chives gives these tea sandwiches an attractive look and a fresh finish.

- 1/4 cup whipped cream cheese spread
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. hot sauce (such as Cholula), plus more to taste
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1/8 tsp. onion powder
- 9 Tbsp. mayonnaise, divided
- 3 oz. hot-smoked boneless, skinless trout or salmon, finely chopped (about ½ cup) (see Note)
- 1 small red onion (about 3 inches in diameter), peeled
- 12 brioche bread slices (about ½ inch thick) (such as Pepperidge Farm Farmhouse Brioche)
- 1 cup chopped mixed tender fresh herbs (such as dill, parsley, and chives)
- 1. Stir together cream cheese, lemon juice, hot sauce, salt, onion powder, and 3 tablespoons mayonnaise in a medium bowl until well combined. Stir in smoked trout. Season to taste with additional hot sauce and salt. Cover and chill until ready to use.
- **2.** Slice onion crosswise into 12 (½- to ½-inch-thick) rounds (do not separate into individual rings); set aside.
- **3.** Cut bread slices into 24 rounds using a 2½-inch round cookie cutter; discard scraps, or reserve for another use. Spread about 1 tablespoon trout mixture on 12 of the bread circles; top with 1 onion round, removing outer layers of onion as needed to fit bread. Cover sandwiches with remaining bread rounds.
- **4.** Spread herbs on a small plate. Working with 1 sandwich at a time, spread about 1½ teaspoons mayonnaise around edges of bread; roll

sandwich edges lightly in herbs. Repeat with remaining sandwiches. —PAIGE GRANDJEAN

MAKE AHEAD Trout spread can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 days. Sandwiches can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 6 hours.

WINE A floral and festive rosé Champagne: NV Philippe Gamet Champagne Brut Rosé

NOTE Hot-smoked trout or salmon is available at most grocery stores or online at shelskys.com.

Brisket with Melted Onions

PHOTO P. 85

ACTIVE 50 MIN; TOTAL 3 HR 20 MIN SERVES 8

Onions are the star of this meaty main dish—a recipe that chef Dr. Bruce Aidells first shared with Food & Wine magazine in 2000 and has since become a favorite for the holiday season. The brisket, seasoned with oregano, thyme, paprika, and black pepper, needs several hours in the oven before the meat tenderizes and breaks down, but that's perfect timing for the onions, which soften and soak up the flavors in the cooking liquid as they braise, morphing into a rich, satisfying gravy. The recipe comes together in one pan, making cleanup a breeze.

- 5 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1 Tbsp. sweet Hungarian paprika (see Note)
- 2 tsp. black pepper
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh oregano
- 1 (6-lb.) beef brisket flat, trimmed
- 1 cup hot water
- 1/2 cup dried porcini mushrooms (about 1/2 oz.)
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 cups dry vermouth or dry white wine
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 (14.5-oz.) can diced tomatoes, drained
- 3 fresh bay leaves
- 2 lb. yellow onions (about 4 onions), sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 3 Tbsp. chopped garlic (about 8 large cloves)
- **1.** Stir together salt, paprika, black pepper, thyme, and oregano in a small bowl. Rub brisket all over with salt mixture; set aside.

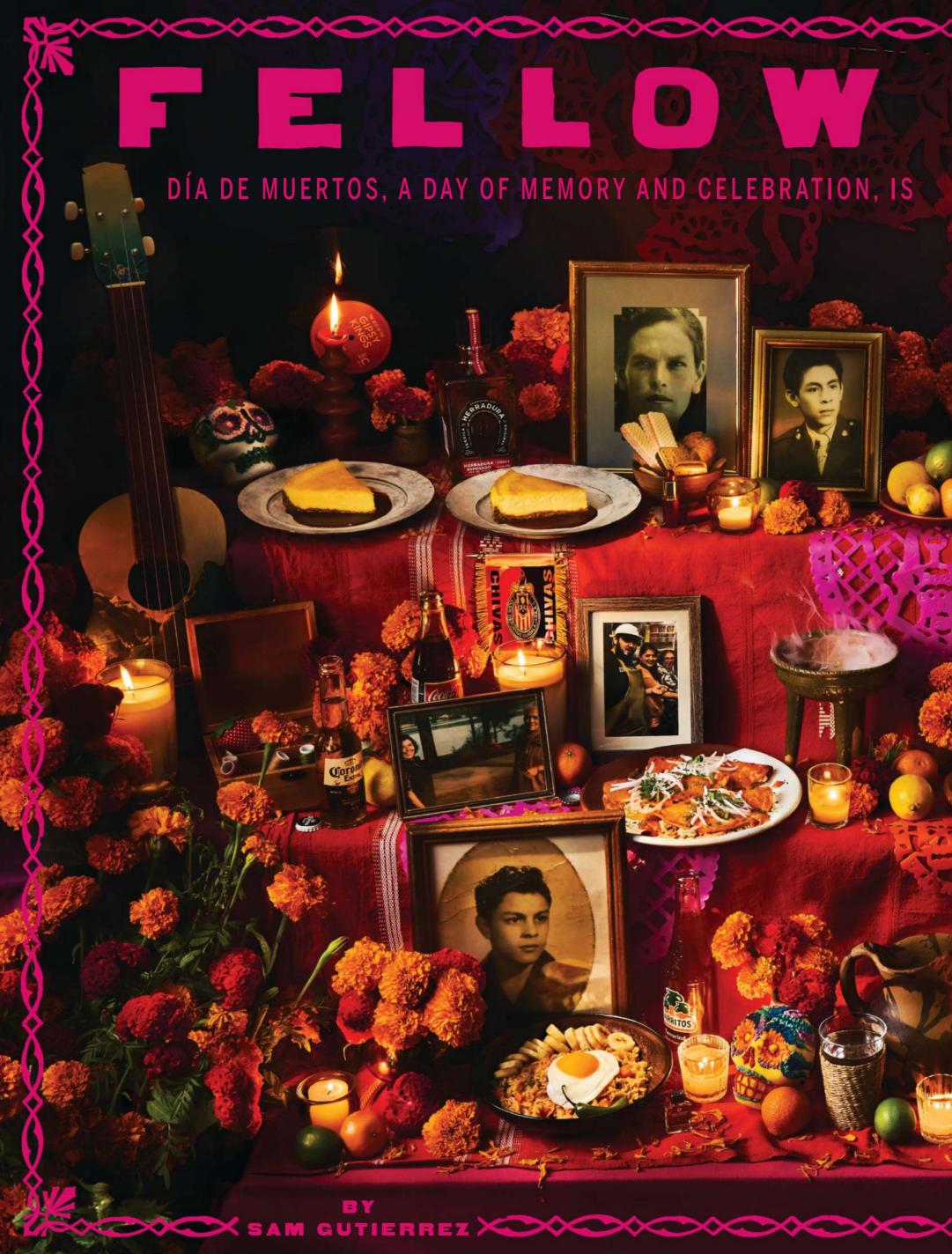
- 2. Pour 1 cup hot water over porcini mushrooms in a medium bowl. Let stand until rehydrated, about 20 minutes. Drain mushrooms, reserving soaking liquid. Rinse and coarsely chop mushrooms; set aside.
- 3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Heat oil in a stainless steel or nonreactive roasting pan on the stove over medium-high. Add brisket to roasting pan, fat side down, and cook until well browned, 5 to 6 minutes. Flip and cook until both sides are well browned, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer brisket to a large rimmed baking sheet; set aside. Add vermouth and chicken stock to roasting pan. Pour in mushroom soaking liquid, stopping before you reach the grit at the bottom of the liquid; discard grit and remaining liquid. Cook over medium, scraping to release browned bits from bottom of pan, until simmering, about 2 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, bay leaves, and chopped mushrooms.
- 4. Return brisket to roasting pan, fat side up. Scatter onions and garlic on top of and around brisket. Bring to a boil over medium-high. Transfer pan to preheated oven, and roast, uncovered, until onions on top of brisket begin to brown, about 30 minutes. Cover pan tightly with aluminum foil, and continue roasting until a meat thermometer inserted into thickest portion of brisket registers 200°F and meat is fork-tender, 2 hours to 2 hours and 30 minutes.
- **5.** Transfer brisket to a cutting board, and tent loosely with foil to keep warm. Place roasting pan on stove over medium, and bring to a simmer. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until sauce reduces slightly, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat; discard bay leaves, and skim off excess fat (see Note). Season sauce to taste with additional salt.
- **6.** Thinly slice brisket against the grain. Arrange brisket slices on a serving platter, and spoon sauce and onions over top. —DR. BRUCE AIDELLS

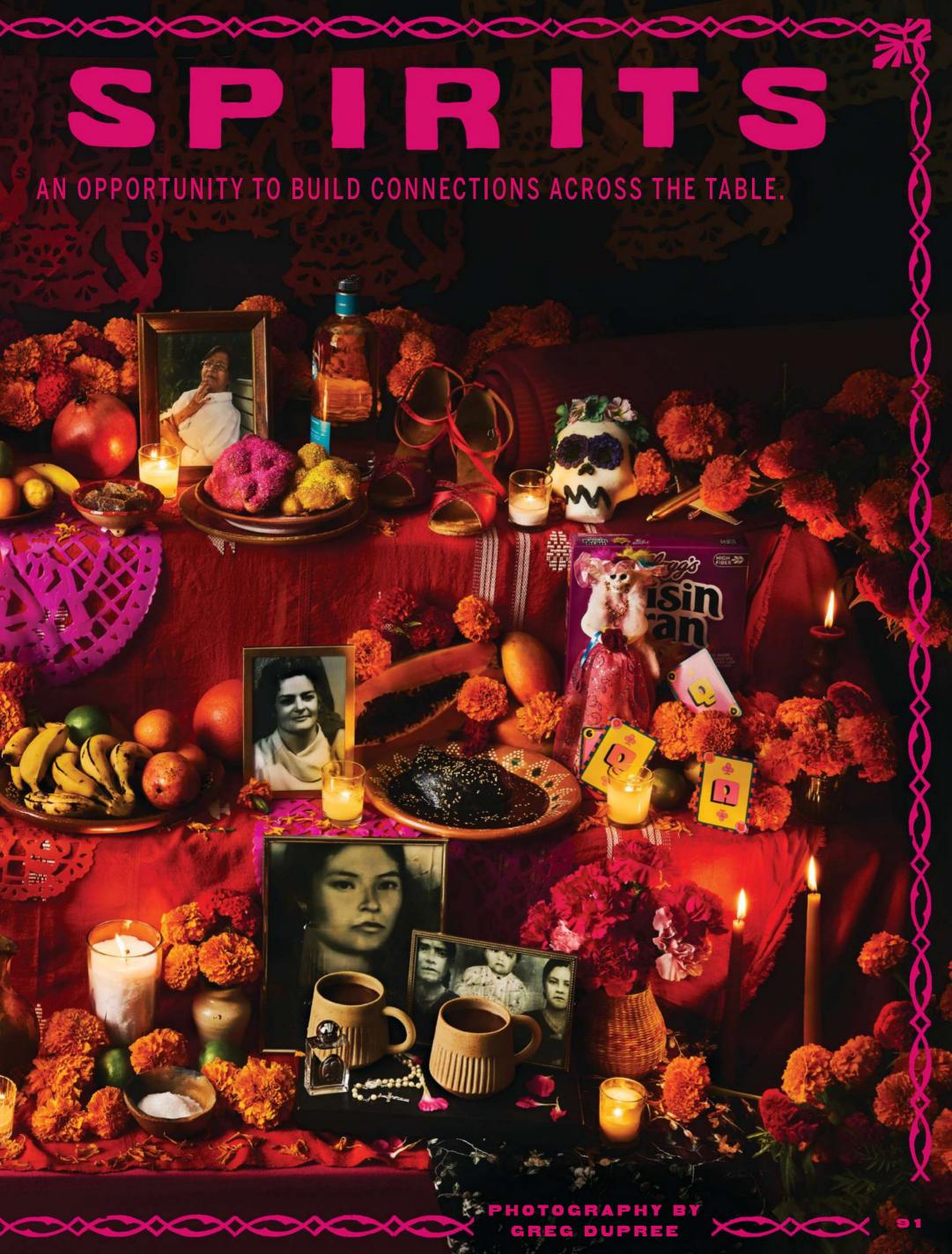
MAKE AHEAD Brisket can be prepared through step 5 up to 1 day in advance. After reducing the sauce on the stovetop, return the brisket to the sauce, cover the pan, and refrigerate. Reheat, covered, in a 300°F oven.

WINE A cherry-scented Chianti Classico: 2019 Ruffino Riserva Ducale Oro Gran Selezione

NOTE Sweet Hungarian paprika is available at specialty stores or online at spicejungle.com. If preparing the dish in advance, you can refrigerate it overnight—the fat will rise to the top and harden, making it easy to simply lift off and discard before reheating.









MY FAMILY MOVED TO AUSTIN from Dolores Hidalgo, Mexico, when I was six. Until then, I'd grown up like all of my Mexican cousins, speaking strictly Spanish, celebrating *el quince* (not the Fourth), and memorizing the words to all the Luis Miguel songs my mom had on constant rotation. Throughout my childhood, I clung fiercely to every fragment of my Mexican identity that I could grasp, refusing to accept my new American reality. One of the things I held onto most tightly was my love for Día de Muertos.

In Mexico, Día de Muertos is a major holiday, during which we remember the dead and honor their return to the land of the living with citywide parades, cemetery vigils, and all manner of festivities. These take place throughout October but culminate on November 1 and 2, when people who have passed on to the afterlife are believed to return to this mortal plane. The holiday is most meaningfully observed in people's homes, where families build *ofrendas* (altars to departed loved ones), prepare their favorite foods, and share memories.

I'm not alone in my love for this ethereal holiday: 2023 F&W Best New Chef Edgar Rico, of Nixta Taqueria in Austin, maintains an altar at his restaurant and encourages his staff and community to bring in photos of loved ones to add to it. "You don't ever mourn ... You remember all the good times you had with them and all the beautiful memories that you made together," he says.

For her ofrenda, 2022 F&W Best New Chef Ana Castro makes a plate of Mexican rice for her grandfather Manuel, whom she credits for instilling in her a reverence for tradition; a generous spirit; and, above all, a love of food. "My grandpa would literally be like, 'Of all the delicacies there are in the world, keep all your stuff and give me an arroz rojo a la mexicana with a fried egg,'" she says. (Find Castro's recipe online at foodandwine .com/arroz-mexicana.)

Chef and television personality Claudette Zepeda doesn't make just one dish, but a whole delectable spread for Día de Muertos. "I think the occasion demands it," she says. Its breadth reflects the influence of her grandmother Paula, who was her confidante, roommate, and "one of the toughest ladies in the world." She also greatly impacted Zepeda's love of food. With the recent passing of her dad, Hugo, who shared Zepeda's love of sweets, this year she'll add a tin of cookies, candied pumpkin, and a cheesecake with a tequila cajeta (recipe p. 100).

In addition to placing photographs of loved ones on her ofrenda, 2023 F&W Best New Chef Isabel Coss includes chefs who influenced her, like Julia Child and Anthony Bourdain. Still, the most important addition is her grandmother Matilde. "She was always an icon for me," says Coss, who puts out her personal pan de muerto (recipe p. 99), a confection traditionally enjoyed on Día de Muertos. "You serve the food because it's what your family is going to love to eat. But also because food is an everyday ceremony of consuming something that died for you to have life. So it's a circle," she says.



year to experience the magic of Día de Muertos back on Mexican soil. It felt electric to be there. Storefronts were decorated with *cempasúchil*, orange marigold flowers—the traditional flower of the dead in Aztec lore. Papier-mâché skeletons hung from window frames and looked down from rooftops. Stalls of face painters transforming people into elegant *calaveras* (skulls) were on every corner, and the streets were packed with vendors. *Comparsas*, mini music-filled carnivals of costumed Oaxaqueños, took place throughout the city. At those, participants stay on their feet all night, dancing into the wee hours of the morning. Oaxaca leaves no doubt: Día de Muertos is a time for celebration.

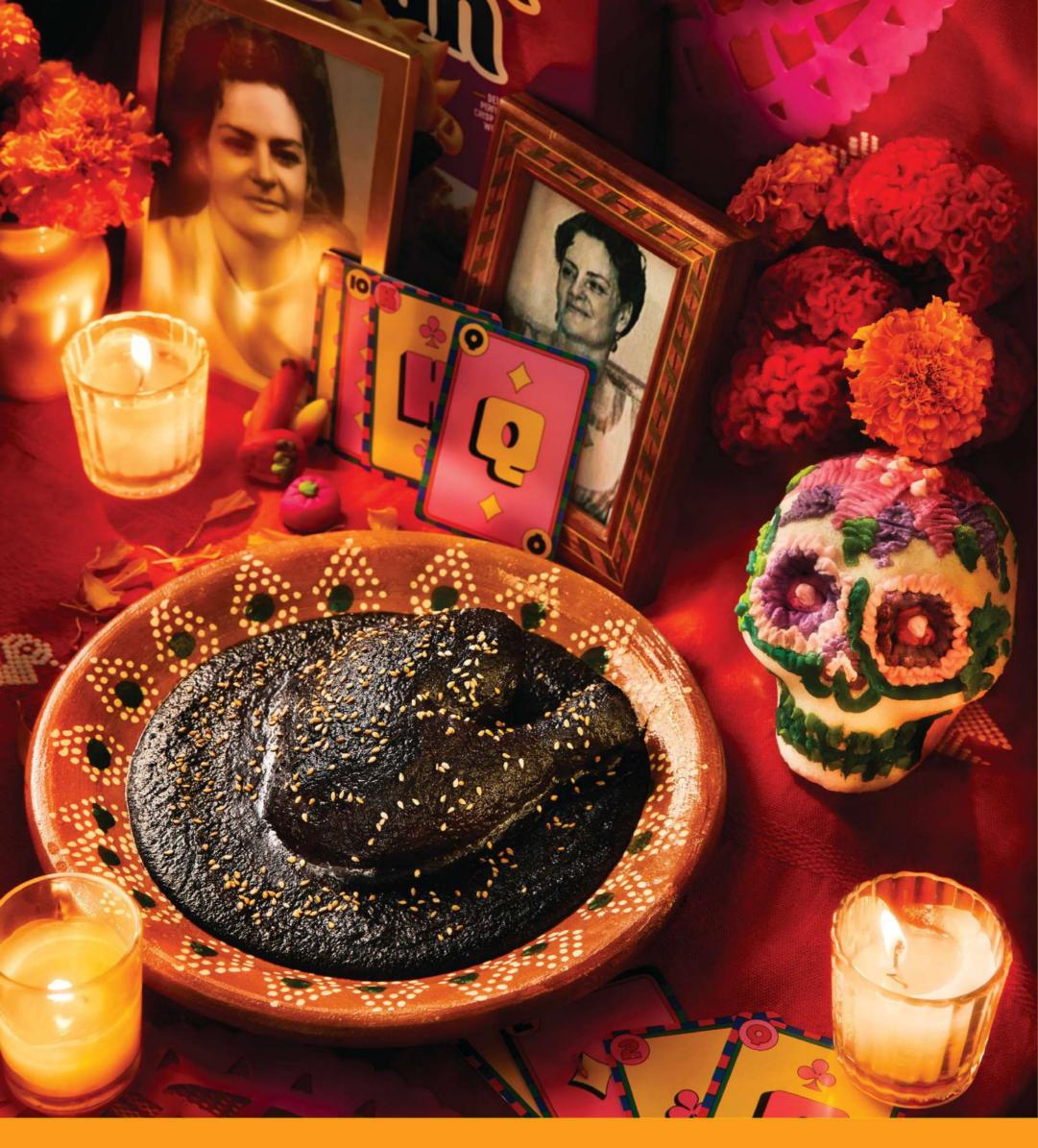
The same mood extends to cemeteries. Every year in Atzompa, one of the more traditional cemeteries on the rural outskirts of the city, elegant tapered candles illuminate graves embellished with blankets of cempasúchil. Attendees quietly tell stories of their loved ones while watching over the flames, making sure they don't go out. Some build fires to heat a pot of ponche that will keep them warm during their all-night vigil. Over in another cemetery, Xoxocotlán, the vibe is decidedly more of a party. Here, as you walk from grave to grave, the soundtrack reflects the tastes of the



MUERTO

ISABEL COSS, FOR HER GRANDMOTHER MATILDE OLVERA

- A FORMER BALLERINA who had to follow a strict diet for many years, Isabel Coss credits her grandmother
- Matilde for sparking the love of food that led her to become a chef. It was Matilde, always a rule-breaker, who
- would give Coss the special treats that she so cherished. Today, Coss makes pan de muerto (recipe p. 99) in her memory. "It's fluffy and delicious," she says. "And it's colorful, so it makes you feel like a kid while you eat
- it." The best way to enjoy it is probably while taking a moment to remember your loved ones and the signifi-
- cance of the day. "The rest of the year might be sad, but Día de Muertos is happy. Family that has passed,
- you know they're with you," Coss says. "And the food you cook is to remind them that you love them and you
- want them close. The afterlife is a continuation. They're not gone; they just have passed to another part."



NEGRO

FERMÍN NÚÑEZ, FOR HIS GRANDMOTHER MARÍA EUGENIA CHÁVEZ DE NÚÑEZ

- **FERMÍN NÚÑEZ HAS BEEN WORKING** on this mole negro (recipe p. 101) for years. He has a few rules for
- making it. First, if he's in a bad mood, he won't make it at all. When it's mole day, he plays the Mexican rock band Maná's album Sueños Líquidos, both to set the vibe and to let everyone at the restaurant know that
- he cannot be disturbed. It's the first album his family let him play on road trips; he knows where he should
- be in the process based on the track that's playing. "This mole is an expression of who I am and what I've gone through to get to this version," he says. "I hope that my grandmother can see that and the trajectory
- that I took to get here." What would his grandmother's feedback be if she were to try it? "I would think that
- she would hopefully say it's perfect, and I'm perfect, and I'm the best f---ing mole maker ever."



ALL ABOUT ALFEÑIQUES

Intricately decorated sugar skulls, ubiquitous throughout Mexico and serving as both decoration and treat, are a staple of Día de Muertos. They belong to a category of sweets called alfeñiques, or sugar candies. In my home state of Guanajuato, during Muertos season you'll find vendors selling not just sugar skulls but alfeñiques in all sorts of dazzling colors, shapes, and sizes: a menagerie of animals; figurines representing certain professions; lavishly dressed skeleton figures with widebrimmed hats known as catrinas; and skeletons in little coffins that pop up with the tug of a string. But my favorite are foodshaped alfeñiques, which include special-occasion dishes like the plates of tamales, enchiladas, and mole families might make for their altars, but in cute bite-size versions. For dessert, fruits are plentiful, but I particularly enjoy the mini pieces of pan dulce, which you can select individually or grab in a basket. People do pick up pieces that represent what their loved ones did, ate, or liked when they were alive to add to their altar, but just as often, they buy them for the pure joy of tucking into a tiny plate of tacos or enjoying a miniature concha. (For similar, visit jscraftsdallas.etsy .com or mexicolindo imports.etsy.com.)



deceased—in one corner, there's a full mariachi band, in another some catchy banda tunes, and just a little farther along there are the synths of the '80s hit "Lobo-Hombre en París."

While each cemetery has its own personality, they share an overwhelming feeling of reverence created by families who have taken time out of their busy lives to be graveside with those who are no longer here. As stories and laughs are exchanged over mezcal, there's a strong feeling of closeness to one another and to their departed loved ones.

That sense of closeness is even stronger in people's homes, where Día de Muertos celebrants dedicate a space—whether a little corner or an entire room—to building an altar. The importance of these points of reverence is palpable at shops and markets, which are in full swing, with vendors hawking fruits, *papel picado* (colorful paper decorations), sugar skulls, copal trays, and mountains of cempasúchil—everything you could need to make your altar—well into the night. At a bakery in Mitla, an hour southeast of Oaxaca City, I met baker Héctor García, who has spent his entire life making pan de muerto. "On these days, we leave behind the quotidian," he told me. "We disconnect from reality to be in communion, the people who are alive and those who aren't. We feel in our surroundings their presence—that air, that vibe—and that's what makes Día de Muertos special."

García's words drove home to me what the holiday is all about—taking time away from your daily routine to build an altar, to reach out to the brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins you may not have seen all year—and to take the time to prepare a plate of food for, and celebrate the memory of, someone who won't actually be coming to the table. It can feel that it takes a bit of magic to do all that, it's true. But it's precisely that magic that moves me to celebrate this holiday with an altar of my own year after year.

This Día de Muertos, I'll be adding a few more pictures, having just lost my grandmother, one of my uncles, and my grandfather-in-law. But unlike other times of the year, I won't be sad. I'll be welcoming them with a path of cempasúchil, a plate of enchiladas verdes, some cigarettes, a Terry's Chocolate Orange, and an immense gratitude to delight in their presence, thanks to the magic of a culture that believes this to be true.

HOW TO EXPERIENCE DÍA DE MUERTOS IN OAXACA

OAXACA'S DÍA DE MUERTOS EVENTS TAKE PLACE FROM THE END OF OCTOBER THROUGH EARLY NOVEMBER, WITH THE MAIN FESTIVAL FROM OCT. 31 TO NOV. 2.

WHERE TO STAY

GRAND FIESTA AMERICANA OAXACA

Located between the city center's major sights (and restaurants) and the artsy neighborhood of Jalatlaco, this four-star hotel is right in the middle of all the action. (Rooms from \$380, fiesta mericanatravelty.com)

EXPLORE OAXACAN CRAFTS

Oaxaca City is surrounded by small towns and communities specializing in a variety of traditional crafts. Go to San Bartolo Coyotepec for barro negro (clay pottery with a glossy black finish), San Martín Tilcajete for alebrijes (colorful animal-inspired wood carvings), and Teotitlán del Valle for expertly woven textiles.

WHERE TO EAT

ALFONSINA

During the day, matriarch Elvia León serves up deeply local, casual fare, while at night her son, Cosme-trained chef Jorge León, sends out a five-course tasting menu. (alfonsina.mx)

CRUDO

Utilizing Japanese techniques with Oaxacan ingredients, this spot offers two omakase options in cozy six-seat or 12-seat rooms. (instagram .com/crudo_oaxaca)

LEVADURA DE OLLA

Recently awarded a Michelin star, this spot by Thalia Barrios García features classic Oaxacan dishes inspired by rural communities, especially from the Sierra Sur region. It's hard not to order everything on the menu. (levaduradeolla.mx)

WHAT TO DO

LIVE OAXACA

Founder Omar Alonso, who was born and raised in Oaxaca, offers a series of curated epicurean and cultural experiences. Don't miss his Día de Muertos ofrenda tour, which includes dinner, drinks, and guided visits to cemeteries around the city. (\$300 per person, oaxacking.com)

MERCADO 20 DE NOVIEMBRE AND MERCADO BENITO JUÁREZ

Oaxaca's markets are legendary. Be sure to try Oaxacan cheese (known locally as quesillo), tlayudas (thin, tortillalike flatbreads with your choice of toppings), tejate (a pre-Hispanic cacao and corn drink), and chapulines (the crunchy crickets you'll find on every menu).



CHEESECAKE WITH TEQUILA CAJETA

CLAUDETTE ZEPEDA, FOR HER DAD, HUGO HERBERTO ZEPEDA, AND GRANDMOTHER PAULA VALADEZ

- A MATRIARCH WHO OPERATED on the belief that a woman could take on the world with good
- lipstick and good eyebrows, Claudette Zepeda's grandmother had a tough life, moving constantly
- to wherever there was work to be found. It was thanks to this, though, that Zepeda was able
- to experience the flavors of far-flung parts of Mexico as a child. "I was blessed with an entire
 map of Mexico on my table," she says. In this cheesecake (recipe p. 100), which she makes for
- her grandmother and her father, she riffs on cajeta envinada, a type of dulce de leche typically
- enhanced with a touch of wine, by leaning on another of her dad's favorites: tequila."I visualize us
- having that, and I'm like, 'Oh, can you taste the earthiness and the grassiness of it?' My dad was
- an intellectual guy, and I thought this would be a good conversation starter."





ENTOMATADAS

EDGAR RICO, FOR HIS GRANDMOTHERS, MARTHA VEGA AND JOSEFINA

- JOSEFINA, EDGAR RICO'S PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER, was "an awesome little firecracker"
- who made "really lovely food," he says. Before opening Nixta Taqueria, Rico was able to live with
- her in San Luis Potosí for a couple of months and absorbed her tortilla-making knowledge and
- kitchen know-how. Martha, his maternal grandmother, worked for many years as a molendera;
 this recipe includes her standard table salsa, which was always at the ready when something
- needed to be whipped up quickly. Perfect for breakfast, lunch, or dinner, Rico's entomatadas
- (recipe p. 100) are simple enough for an everyday meal but work for a special occasion, too. As
- Rico puts it, "It's just tortillas, salsa, and cheese. How is this hitting so much?"



CHAMPURRADO

DÍANA PEREZ, FOR HER GRANDMOTHER GUADALUPE GARCÍA TORRES AND GREAT-GRANDMOTHER EFIGENIA GARCÍA LUCERO

- **DÍA DE MUERTOS** was a joyous occasion for F&W Associate Food Editor Díana Perez as a
- child. Each year, her mother set up an altar at the dining room table. There was always champurrado (recipe opposite), a thick drink made with masa and flavored with aromatic Mexican
- chocolate, cinnamon, and piloncillo. Hearty enough to have on its own or accompanied with
- pan de muerto, champurrado is a real treat during Día de Muertos. "The scent of chocolate,
- cinnamon, and piloncillo meant only one thing in my home," says Perez. "It's Día de Muertos!"
- This recipe was passed down from her mother, Juana; her maternal grandmother, Guadalupe;
- and her great-grandmother Efigenia, three women who shaped her love of food and family.

CHAMPURRADO

TOTAL 25 MIN; SERVES 8

Redolent with cinnamon and the spices in Mexican chocolate, this champurrado by F&W Associate Food Editor Díana Perez is sweetened with piloncillo, a rich, caramellike brown sugar used in Mexican sweets and drinks. Hearty enough to drink on its own but also delicious as an accompaniment to pan de muerto, champurrado is a welcome treat during Día de Muertos, warming guests coming in from the chilly nights of the season. For a deeper chocolate flavor, add 1 more chocolate tablet and reduce the sugar by half.

- 1 (5-inch) cinnamon stick
- 6 oz. piloncillo (about 3/4 cup) or 1 cup granulated sugar (see Note)
- 8 cups water, divided
- 2 (3-oz.) tablets Mexican chocolate (such as Nestlé Abuelita Mexican Hot Chocolate)
- 1 cup masa harina (such as Maseca)
- 1. Stir together cinnamon, piloncillo, and 6 cups water in a large saucepan; bring to a boil over medium-high. Reduce heat to medium, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until piloncillo is dissolved, about 2 minutes. Add chocolate tablets, and cook over medium, stirring occasionally, until chocolate is melted, about 3 minutes.
- 2. Whisk together masa harina and remaining 2 cups water in a medium bowl until smooth. Pour masa harina—water mixture into saucepan, and whisk until well combined.
- **3.** Bring mixture to a gentle boil over medium, and cook, whisking constantly, until thickened and mixture coats the back of a spoon, about 5 minutes. Pour through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a large bowl. Ladle champurrado into individual cups, and serve. —DÍANA PEREZ

MAKE AHEAD Cooled champurrado can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat over low until warmed through.

NOTE Piloncillo, a rich, caramel-like brown sugar used in Mexican and Central American cuisine, is sold hardened in a cone shape or round cakes. Use a serrated or heavy knife to chop into pieces.

PAN DE MUERTO

РНОТО Р. 9

ACTIVE 1 HR 30 MIN; TOTAL 3 HR 20 MIN, PLUS 8 HR CHILLING; SERVES 12

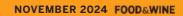
Soft and fragrant, this pan de muerto by 2023 F&W Best New Chef Isabel Coss is a highlight of Día de Muertos festivities. Scented with orange blossom water, the

butter-and-egg-enriched dough is shaped into a circular mound and topped with long ropes of dough formed to resemble bones, then topped with a smaller ball of dough to give the bread its distinctive shape when it bakes. The bread is then brushed with syrup and dusted with granulated sugar or sanding sugars in a variety of colors, including orange and pink, that lend a pop of color to any table or altar. "People love it; it's a sweet bread that's fluffy and delicious," says Coss. "It's a bread everybody can relate to."

- 5 cups bread flour (about 1 lb. 6½ oz.)
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour (about 63/8 oz.), plus more for dusting
- 3/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 4 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 (1/4-oz.) envelopes instant or quickrising yeast
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1/4 cup orange blossom water
- 4 tsp. grated orange zest plus 3 Tbsp. fresh orange juice (from 3 oranges)
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 11 Tbsp. unsalted butter (5½ oz.), cubed and at room temperature, plus more for greasing bowl
- 2 oz. piloncillo (about 1/4 cup), finely chopped
- 1/4 cup water
 Granulated sugar or assorted sanding sugars
- 1. Stir together bread flour, all-purpose flour, granulated sugar, salt, and yeast in a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment. Add milk, orange blossom water, orange zest and juice, and 3 eggs; beat on medium-low speed until flour is mostly incorporated, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape down sides as needed. Reduce mixer speed to low; add butter, about 3 tablespoons at a time, beating until fully incorporated after each addition and scraping sides as needed, 1 to 2 minutes. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until dough is soft, slightly sticky, and elastic (dough should start to pull away from sides of bowl but may still stick to bottom and sides), about 8 to 12 minutes.
- 2. Transfer dough to a large bowl greased with butter. Loosely cover bowl with plastic wrap; let stand in a warm, draft-free place until dough is puffed, about 45 minutes. Chill in refrigerator for at least 8 hours or up to 12 hours.
- **3.** Remove dough from refrigerator; measure out 24 (5/8-ounce) portions, and shape each portion into a ball (for the bones); cover with plastic wrap or a kitchen towel, and set aside. Measure out 12 (1/4-ounce) portions; shape each portion into a ball (for the tops). Place on a baking sheet; cover with plastic wrap, and transfer to refrigerator until ready to use.

- **4.** Evenly divide remaining dough into 12 (about 3-ounce) portions, and shape each portion into a ball (for the base). (Keep dough covered while working, and lightly dust hands and surface with flour as needed.) Place 6 (3-ounce) balls on each of 2 parchment paper—lined baking sheets, spacing dough balls at least 2 to 3 inches apart. Loosely cover with plastic wrap, and let stand in a warm, draft-free place until dough doubles in size, 30 to 45 minutes. Preheat oven to 400°F with rack positioned on the top third shelf.
- **5.** Meanwhile, roll 1 (5%-ounce) ball into a 4½-inch-long rope, working on a very lightly floured surface and lightly flouring hands as needed. Spread 3 fingers of one hand about ½ inch apart, positioning the middle finger in the center of the rope, and press 3 deep indentations into dough. Use your index finger to make impressions deeper if needed until dough resembles a bone. Repeat rolling and shaping process with remaining 23 (5%-ounce) balls. Transfer dough bones to baking sheet with the 12 (¼-ounce) balls; cover and return to refrigerator until ready to use.
- **6.** Using your hand, lightly flatten 6 of the proofed 3-ounce dough balls on 1 baking sheet to about 1-inch thickness. Whisk remaining 1 egg in a small bowl, and lightly brush over flattened dough balls. Remove 12 dough bones and 6 (¼-ounce) dough balls from refrigerator; arrange 2 bones in an X-shape over the top of each flattened ball, pressing or tucking ends beneath the flattened bases as needed. Place 1 (¼-ounce) ball in center of each X-shape to create the top; firmly press down to adhere to X-shaped bones.
- 7. Place baking sheet in preheated oven, and reduce temperature to 350°F. Bake at 350°F until lightly golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted into center of dough registers 190°F, 18 to 20 minutes. Let cool slightly on baking sheet on a wire rack, about 15 minutes. Increase oven temperature to 400°F. Repeat shaping and baking process with remaining 6 (3-ounce) dough balls, remaining 12 dough bones, and remaining 6 (1/4-ounce) dough balls.
- **8.** Bring piloncillo and ¼ cup water to a boil in a small saucepan over mediumhigh, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to medium; simmer, stirring occasionally, until piloncillo is dissolved, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Brush breads evenly with piloncillo syrup. Sprinkle and press granulated sugar or sanding sugar onto bread. Serve. —ISABEL COSS, PASCUAL, WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAKE AHEAD Pan de muerto can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days or in the freezer for 2 to 3 months.



CHEESECAKE WITH TEQUILA CAJETA

PHOTO P. 96

ACTIVE 30 MIN; TOTAL 4 HR 5 MIN, PLUS 6 HR CHILLING; SERVES 8

This silky-smooth cheesecake by chef Claudette Zepeda is set in a crust made with Maria cookies and paired with a cajeta caramel sauce infused with tequila, one of her father's favorites. "I wanted the notes of the tequila to come out and to be able to have that conversation with my father," she says. The result—a feathery, light cheesecake with a sweet, boozy accent.

CRUST

- 9 oz. Maria cookies (see Note), roughly crushed
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 11/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 3/4 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 2 tsp. grated lime zest plus 3 Tbsp. fresh lime juice (from 2 limes)
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter (2 oz.), melted
- 1 large egg yolk

CHEESECAKE

- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1 (8-oz.) container mascarpone cheese, softened
- ²/₃ cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 Tbsp. vanilla extract or vanilla paste
- 1/8 tsp. kosher salt
- 5 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream Hot water

CAJETA

- 1 cup cajeta (such as Coronado Dulce de Leche Caramel Topping)
- 1 Tbsp. whole milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 to 2 Tbsp. (½ to 1 oz.) reposado tequila (such as Herradura), to taste
- 1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a 9-inch springform cake pan with parchment paper. Place 3 sheets of heavy-duty aluminum foil on a clean work surface; place pan on top. Firmly wrap aluminum foil up sides of pan.
- 2. Make the crust: Process cookies, cinnamon, salt, ginger, and nutmeg in a food processor until finely ground, about 15 seconds. Add lime zest and juice, melted butter, and egg yolk. Process until combined and mixture resembles wet sand, about 15 seconds, scraping down sides as needed. Press crumb mixture evenly into bottom and 1 inch up sides of prepared cake pan.
- **3.** Bake crust in preheated oven until just golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove

- crust from oven, and let cool completely, about 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 325°F.
- 4. Make the cheesecake: Beat cream cheese and mascarpone in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on medium-low speed until smooth and fluffy, about 2 minutes. In a steady stream, add sugar, vanilla, and salt; beat until combined, about 30 seconds. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating until fully incorporated after each addition. (Scrape down sides of bowl as needed.) Gradually add heavy cream, and beat until smooth and fully combined, about 45 seconds.
- **5.** Pour cheesecake batter into cooled crust, tapping pan lightly to remove large air bubbles. Set springform pan into a large roasting pan, and place on the oven rack; pour hot water into roasting pan, filling to halfway up sides of springform pan.
- **6.** Bake at 325°F until edges of cheesecake batter are set and center of cake is very jiggly, 1 hour and 40 minutes to 1 hour and 50 minutes, tenting with aluminum foil after 40 minutes to prevent overbrowning. Remove cheesecake from water bath, and let cool to room temperature, about 2 hours. Cover loosely with plastic wrap, and refrigerate until completely cooled, at least 6 hours or up to 12 hours.
- 7. Make the cajeta: Combine cajeta and milk in a small saucepan over medium; cook, stirring occasionally, until thinned out and warmed through, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in vanilla and 1 tablespoon tequila, whisking to incorporate. Add additional tequila, 1 teaspoon at a time, to taste. Transfer to a small bowl; set aside, and let cool slightly, about 10 minutes. Unmold cheesecake, and serve sliced with cajeta. —CLAUDETTE ZEPEDA

MAKE AHEAD Cheesecake can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Separated cake slices can be stored in the freezer for up to 2 months.

NOTE Find Maria cookies in the international aisle of most grocery stores.

ENTOMATADAS

PHOTO P. 97

ACTIVE 45 MIN; TOTAL 55 MIN SERVES 4

For 2023 F&W Best New Chef Edgar Rico of Nixta Taqueria in Austin, these savory entomatadas are perfect for an ofrenda for his grandmothers Martha Vega and Josefina. Fragrant corn tortillas are fried until they're crispy enough to stand up to a dip in the tomato sauce but still pliable enough to fill with queso fresco and Cotija cheeses. "It's just tortillas, salsa, and cheese," says Rico. "How is this hitting so much?"

- 3 lb. plum tomatoes (about 16 tomatoes), quartered
- ¹/₂ cup chopped white onion (about 1 small onion), plus more thinly sliced for garnish
- 2 medium serrano chiles (about 1 oz.), seeded if desired
- 1 medium (1-oz.) jalapeño chile, seeded if desired
- 2 large garlic cloves, smashed
- 1/2 Tbsp. tomato bouillon granules (such as Knorr)
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1 cup water, divided
- 1 Tbsp. lard Canola oil
- 12 (6-inch) corn tortillas
- 4 oz. queso fresco, crumbled (about 1 cup)
- 4 oz. Cotija cheese, crumbled (about 1 cup)
 - Finely chopped fresh cilantro and finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, for garnish
- 1. Stir together tomatoes, onion, serrano chiles, jalapeño chile, garlic, tomato bouillon granules, salt, and ½ cup water in a medium Dutch oven. Bring to a boil over medium, and cook, stirring occasionally and mashing tomatoes using the back of a wooden spoon, until tomatoes and chiles are tender, about 20 minutes. Transfer tomato mixture to a blender; secure lid on blender, and remove center piece to allow steam to escape. Place a clean towel over opening, and process until smooth, about 1 minute.
- **2.** Melt lard in a large skillet over medium. Add tomato mixture and remaining ½ cup water. Bring to a simmer, and cook, stirring occasionally, until thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 10 minutes. Season to taste with additional salt. Remove tomato sauce from heat, and set aside.
- **3.** Pour oil to a depth of ¼ inch in a separate large skillet; heat over medium. Working with 1 tortilla at a time, fry over low heat just until pliable, 15 to 20 seconds each. Transfer to a paper towel–lined baking sheet, and pat dry. Using tongs, dip 1 tortilla into tomato sauce to coat. Transfer to a plate, and fill with 1 tablespoon queso fresco and 1 tablespoon Cotija cheese. Fold tortilla, and drizzle with additional tomato sauce. Repeat process with remaining tortillas. Garnish entomatadas with thinly sliced onions, cilantro, and parsley. —EDGAR RICO, NIXTA TAQUERIA, AUSTIN

MAKE AHEAD Salsa can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator up to 1 week ahead.

WINE A fresh, apple-scented Australian white: 2022 Yalumba Y Series Chardonnay

MOLE NEGRO WITH CHICKEN

PHOTO P 94

ACTIVE 2 HR 10 MIN; TOTAL 3 HR 20 MIN, PLUS 12 HR CHILLING; SERVES 6

2021 F&W Best New Chef Fermín Núñez of Este and Suerte in Austin has worked on this mole negro ("black mole") for over a decade. Dedicated to his grandmother María, Núñez's recipe is a complex symphony of dried chiles that are burnt until black and crispy, hence its name. Toasted nuts plus dried fruits, spices, and Mexican chocolate add a touch of sweetness. Served over seasoned, moist roast chicken and garnished with sesame seeds, it's a mole Núñez believes would make his grandmother proud. Making this recipe is a labor of love—it requires almost a full day of cooking—but with a few components that can be made ahead or require little hands-on time (such as the mole paste and the salt-brined chicken) and delicious results, it's well worth the effort.

MOLE PASTE

- 4 dried pasilla chiles (11/4 oz.), stems and seeds removed
- 4 dried ancho chiles (2 oz.), stems and seeds removed
- 2 dried morita chipotle chiles (¼ oz.), stems and seeds removed
- 6 Tbsp. sunflower oil, divided
- 1/4 cup almonds
- 1/4 cup peanuts
- 1/4 cup pecans
- 1/4 cup whole garlic cloves (about 12 garlic cloves), peeled
- 2 Tbsp. sliced fresh ginger (about 1 [2-inch] piece)
- 4 (4-inch) thyme sprigs
- 1 fresh bay leaf
- 1 small white onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1/4 cup prunes (about 6 prunes)
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
- 2 Tbsp. sesame seeds
- 3/4 tsp. anise seeds
- 3/4 tsp. whole allspice
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 2¹/₂ oz. Mexican chocolate, chopped (about ¹/₂ cup)

CHICKEN

- 1 (3½- to 4-lb.) whole chicken
- 1 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 small (4-oz.) white onion, cut in half lengthwise
- 1 small (2-oz.) lemon, halved
- 2 dried pasilla chiles (about ½ oz.)
- 4 medium garlic cloves, unpeeled

- 1 small bunch fresh thyme
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter (2 oz.), softened
- 3 cups chicken broth
 Toasted sesame seeds
 Crema Mexicana (optional)
- 1. Make the mole paste: Preheat oven to 400°F. Place chiles on a large baking sheet. Bake until black and crispy (almost like ash), 10 to 12 minutes. (You know it's right when there is light smoke coming from the oven.) Transfer chiles to a medium bowl; set aside.
- **2.** Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium; add almonds, and cook, stirring often, until lightly toasted, about 2 minutes. Add peanuts and pecans; cook, stirring often, until toasted to a deep golden brown, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer nuts to a small bowl, and let cool; set aside.
- **3.** Add 1 tablespoon oil to the same skillet, and heat over medium until shimmering. Add garlic and ginger; cook, stirring often, until deep golden brown, 5 to 6 minutes. Add thyme and bay leaf; cook, stirring often, until bloomed and toasted, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to a separate medium bowl; set aside.
- **4.** In the same skillet, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium until shimmering; add onion, and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer to bowl with garlic-ginger mixture. Wipe skillet clean. Add prunes to skillet; cook over medium, stirring occasionally, until blistered in spots, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to bowl with garlic-ginger mixture. Wipe skillet clean. Add raisins to skillet, and cook, stirring occasionally, until raisins are plump and charred in spots, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to bowl with garlic-ginger mixture.
- **5.** Wipe skillet clean. Add cinnamon stick, sesame seeds, anise seeds, and allspice to skillet. Cook over medium, stirring often, until fragrant and sesame seeds are toasted, about 2 minutes. Set aside, and let cool slightly, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a mortar and pestle or spice grinder, and crush until finely ground; set aside.
- **6.** Transfer nut mixture to bowl of a food processor. Break toasted chiles into small pieces, and add to food processor. Pulse until finely ground, about 12 pulses. Add ground cinnamon mixture and garlicginger mixture; pulse until mixture becomes crumbly, about 10 pulses. Add 1 cup water; process until mixture forms a smooth paste, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape down sides of bowl as needed.
- **7.** Heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a medium Dutch oven over medium until shimmering. Add tomato paste, and cook, stirring constantly to prevent burning, until

- tomato paste is dark red, 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in chile paste until well combined. Reduce heat to low; cook, stirring occasionally and scraping bottom of Dutch oven to release any browned bits, until a very thick paste forms and mixture darkens, about 30 minutes.
- **8.** Stir in chocolate, and cook, stirring constantly, until melted and well combined, about 2 minutes. Continue to cook over low, stirring often, until chocolate flavor melds and mixture is very dark and crumbly, 15 to 20 minutes. Let paste cool, and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator until ready to use.
- **9. Make the chicken:** Place chicken, breast side up, on a wire rack on a large baking sheet. Pat chicken dry. Sprinkle with salt, rubbing into skin, around joints, and inside cavity. Refrigerate, uncovered, for 12 hours (see Note).
- **10.** Preheat oven to 250°F. Place onion, lemon, chiles, garlic, and thyme in chicken cavity. Rub chicken all over with butter, including underneath skin. Bake chicken until a thermometer inserted into thickest portion of chicken registers 130°F, 1 hour and 30 minutes to 1 hour and 40 minutes.
- 11. Increase oven temperature to 400°F; roast chicken until a thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken breast registers 160°F, about 20 minutes more. Remove from oven; let rest for 10 to 15 minutes. (Temperature of chicken will continue to rise to 165°F.)
- **12.** Carve whole breast meat from chicken, and cut into thick slices; separate drumsticks, thighs, and wings. Discard chicken carcass and ingredients from the cavity.
- 13. Set a Dutch oven over medium-high, and add mole paste (about 3 cups). Whisk in chicken broth until smooth and well combined. Cook, stirring often, until mole sauce is warmed through and thick like gravy, about 5 minutes. Cover chicken with the mole sauce; garnish with toasted sesame seeds and crema, if using.

 —FERMÍN NÚÑEZ, ESTE AND SUERTE, AUSTIN
- MAKE AHEAD Mole paste can be stored in the refrigerator for up to a month or frozen for about 3 months. Thaw paste overnight in the refrigerator, and reheat it on the stove. Mole negro sauce can be stored for up to 5 days in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

WINE A chocolaty, velvety, bold Argentinean Malbec: 2021 Catena

NOTE Salting the chicken allows it to "dry cure" for well-seasoned, juicy meat with crispy, browned skin. Kosher salt works best for dry brining—it adheres well to the meat. Distribute the salt evenly over the bird, and make sure to get into the hard-to-reach spots and crevices.

Parisi, who worked alongside Kiesel in the kitchen for 18 years. "It was anxietyproducing, though we knew that if we could make something taste good in the off-season, it would be that much better in November."

The culmination of countless days of recipe development and testing was a grand Thanksgiving tasting, which the whole editorial team would attend. Kiesel and Parisi would start the turkeys early in the day and then get all the sides ready. "It was a major balancing act, timewise," says Parisi, "because it was a very shortened and intensified expression of true Thanksgiving." The goal was to try everything together to confirm that the recipes, which tasted good on their own, also worked well in tandem.

Even for our team of seasoned Thanksgiving pros, it was a very challenging day. "It was always stressful doing the turkey, no matter how skilled or good I thought I was," says Parisi. "It was still magic when the turkey came out of the oven and the thigh and breast were both just right." In all her years making the holiday meal, Parisi recalls the best tip she ever got from Kiesel, which solves the age-old dilemma of dry turkey breast: "When slicing your turkey, dip the sliced breast in the accumulated juices on the cutting board before putting them on the platter. This keeps them extra juicy," she says. "Such genius!"

In November 2001, the theme was recreating retro Thanksgiving dishes. Kiesel wanted to reimagine a classic 1950s celery-olive tray, a prelude to the holiday meal that was most likely complemented with a stiff martini to set the mood. The original relish "tray" was one to behold: an ornate cut-glass dish containing tall celery stalks, colorful olives, and a cream cheese spread. Kiesel aimed to honor those flavors in a more modern, jazzy way.

To do so, she wanted to turn the combo into a bright salad that could be served as a starter or alongside the meal. The first focus was the celery, which she peeled and soaked in ice water. "This is an old trick that I learned in a restaurant," she says. "If you cut celery and soak it, it becomes more crisp, with a really nice, juicy crunch." Peeling also eliminates any stringiness. Kiesel then replaced the cream cheese with sharper, more pronounced ricotta salata, and she added a punchy hit of anchovy and garlic to the dressing. And while her original recipe called for using kalamata olives, today she prefers a milder olive like Italian Castelvetrano, which adds a rich, buttery component to the salad.

The salad, like countless other dishes from the test kitchen, was a hit.

Cookbook author and food writer Kate Heddings is the former deputy food editor of Food & Wine.



Celery and Olive Antipasto with Ricotta Salata

PHOTO P. 104

ACTIVE 40 MIN; TOTAL 2 HR 40 MIN SERVES 8

Crunchy and bright, this simple celery salad is tossed in a zippy lemon dressing made with umami-rich anchovies. Peeling the celery stalks rids them of any stringy texture. Meaty Castelvetrano olives and salty ricotta salata round out this dinner party—friendly side dish.

- 15 large celery stalks (from 2 [1½-lb.] bunches), peeled and cut into ½- x 2-inch sticks (about 6 cups) (see Note)
- 6 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 3/4 tsp. grated lemon zest plus 31/2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (from 2 lemons)
- 3 anchovy fillets, minced (about 2 tsp.)
- 3 small garlic cloves, minced (about 2 tsp.)
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 3/4 cup pitted Castelvetrano olives, coarsely chopped
- 4 oz. ricotta salata cheese, crumbled (about 1 cup)
- 1. Place celery in a large bowl of ice water, and refrigerate until curled and very crisp, at least 2 hours or up to 8 hours.
- 2. Whisk together olive oil, lemon zest and juice, anchovies, and garlic in a small bowl until smooth. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Set dressing aside.
- **3.** Drain celery, and pat dry; wipe bowl clean. Return celery to bowl; toss with olives and reserved dressing. Transfer mixture to a platter, and scatter ricotta salata over top; serve. —*MARCIA KIESEL*

MAKE AHEAD Drained celery and dressing can be refrigerated overnight in separate airtight containers.

NOTE To peel celery, hold the stalk from the wider end, and rotate it on its side. Run a Y-shaped peeler down the length to remove the outer layer. Rotate the stalk slightly, and repeat until the stalk is fully peeled.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Marcia Kiesel and David McCann; Grace Parisi and Marcia Kiesel; Deb Stenard, Marcia Kiesel, David McCann, Jim Standard (test kitchen assistant), and Bob Chambers (chef and Food & Wine columnist)

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Celery and Olive Antipasto with Ricotta Salata

The F&W Test Kitchen transformed a retro relish tray into a punchy, olive-studded celery salad that's made for entertaining.

By Kate Heddings



buring my 17 years as a food editor at Food & Wine, the F&W Test Kitchen was always the beating heart of the editorial office. This was especially apparent when it came time to produce the annual Thanksgiving issue of the magazine, which just happened to be during the thickest part of summer. When the air outside is steamy and heavy, the last thing anyone is thinking about is stuffing, mashed potatoes, and gravy. But even though an icy lemonade might have been the ticket for the moment, when the smells of roasted turkey and warm apple pie came wafting down the office hallway, we were transported to chilly fall days.

For the annual Thanksgiving issue, the food editors are always presented with a challenge. How do you provide an abundance of delicious and useful



IN THIS ISSUE The near 300-page November 2001 issue had hosting tips galore, recipes from Wolfgang Puck, and an ode to Gott's burger shack in Napa.

Thanksgiving recipes every year, but with a fresh take every time? One year, we created recipes for cooks of every level; another year, we published an entire dinner that could be made from start to finish in under 4 hours. (Tip: You're better off making some dishes ahead.)

"There was a stretch where we did so many stories with numbers and lists," says Marcia Kiesel, who worked in the F&W Test Kitchen for over 26 years. "It was like, 'Oh! We need 20 side dishes and five turkeys!'" Kiesel estimates that she developed more than 200 Thanksgiving recipes during her tenure at F&W.

The summer timing made sourcing certain fall ingredients tricky. "[It] was hilarious, trying to find brussels sprouts or fresh turkeys," remembers Grace

CONTINUED ON P. 102



Ojai Food + Wine, presented by FOOD & WINE, returns March 13-16, 2025 for an exclusive, four-day epicurean gathering. Indulge in live cooking demonstrations, wine seminars, and immersive tastings featuring chefs, master sommeliers, and vintners who've earned Michelin stars, James Beard awards, and industry accolades while helming the iconic restaurants and wineries of the world.

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