

# For Thanksgivukkah Celebrations, Planning and Simplicity Lighten the Load

By Helen Nash

New York (JTA) - The phenomenon this year of Chanukah and Thanksgiving coinciding could mean even larger family gatherings than usual.

So here are some tips: Plan the menus well ahead of the special celebration, and pick recipes that are easy to follow and make them well in advance. This way, cooks can enjoy their company.

Have a few appetizers available as guests arrive and dinner isn't ready. One of my favorites is hummus, which I like to serve with cucumbers, radishes, bell peppers and toasted pita triangles. My recipe uses canned chickpeas, which makes it easy to prepare and is a huge time-saver. Hummus can also keep in the refrigerator for awhile, so it can be prepared toward the beginning of the week.

I like to start my holiday gatherings with soup, and for Chanukah-Thanksgiving, I suggest Barley Soup with Miso. It's a delicious variation on the traditional mushroom barley that most of us know (and love) from child-

hood. This recipe is vegetarian, it's a perfect fall dish, and can be made ahead of time because it freezes well.

What would Thanksgiving be without turkey? And Chanukah without latkes?

My roast turkey is surprisingly easy to make. For Chanukah, I like to make a Grated Potato Pancake, which is ideal when you are expecting many guests. (For another potato recipe, try the baked latkes dish in my latest cookbook, "Helen Nash's New Kosher Cuisine.")

Another holiday favorite for the holidays is Osso Buco (Braised Veal Shanks); make it ahead of time.

To end the festive meal for this once-in-a-lifetime occurrence, I recommend everyone's favorite - brownies. The fudgy treats can be cut into any size or shape. They freeze well and can be served with sorbet or fruit.

## Hummus

Makes about 10 servings as an hors d'oeuvre or dip

Makes 6 appetizer servings

My family and friends always love this creamy dish, which can be found all over the world. Since hummus refrigerates well, I try to keep it on hand as a nutritious snack for my children and grandchildren. The canned chickpeas make this version less garlicky than the norm because the garlic is baked first.

## Ingredients:

8 unpeeled garlic cloves  
One 15.5-oz. can chickpeas, drained  
3 T. tahini (sesame paste)  
1/4 c. freshly squeezed lemon juice  
1 t. kosher salt  
1/4 t. ground cumin  
1/3 c. plus 2 T. cold water

## Preparation:

Wrap the garlic tightly in a piece of foil. Bake in a toaster oven at 350 degrees for 15 min., or till soft. Remove and let cool until you can handle the cloves. Squeeze the pulp from each clove into a food processor. Add the chickpeas, tahini, lemon juice, salt, and cumin. Pulse till smooth, adding water through the feed tube till the mixture is creamy and has a mayonnaise-like consistency. Season to taste.

## Barley Soup with Miso

Makes 12 servings

The addition of miso adds a delicate Asian flavor; the bright green dill, a nice jolt of color.

## Ingredients:

2 med. onions  
3 garlic cloves  
4 celery stalks, peeled  
4 med. carrots, peeled  
1 lb. white mushrooms  
3 T. extra virgin olive oil  
1/2 c. med. pearl barley  
8 c. vegetable broth  
1 bunch fresh dill  
2 T. barley miso paste (see note following Preparation steps)  
Kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper

## Preparation:

It is easy to chop the vegetables in a food processor. Quarter the onions and garlic, and pulse in the food processor till coarse; remove to a bowl. Cut the celery and carrots into large pieces. Pulse them separately until coarse, and add to the onions and garlic. Wipe the mushrooms with a damp paper towel and cut them in quarters. Pulse till coarse and set aside. (If you chop everything together, the vegetables will become mushy.) Heat the oil in a lg. saucepan. Sauté the onions, garlic, celery, and carrots for 1 min. Add the barley and broth and bring to a boil over high heat. Lower the heat and cook, covered, for 15 min. Add the mushrooms to the soup along with half the dill. Cook for another 15 min. or till the barley is tender. Remove and discard the dill. Stir in the miso and season to taste with salt and pepper. Snip the remaining dill for garnish.

**Note:** You can buy barley miso in most health-food stores.

## Grated Potato Pancake

Makes 12 servings

This large pancake is fun to

serve to a large gathering - you just cut it into cake-like wedges - and it's not greasy. Another plus: You can prepare it ahead of time and reheat before serving.

## Ingredients:

4 lg. Idaho baking potatoes  
Kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
4 tablespoons vegetable oil

## Preparation:

Peel and quarter the potatoes. If you are not grating them immediately, place them in a bowl of cold water to prevent discoloration. Using the med. grating attachment of a food processor, grate the potatoes coarsely. Place in a dish towel and wring dry to remove the liquid. Transfer to a bowl. Season well with salt and pepper. Heat 2 T. of the oil in a 12" nonstick skillet. Add the potatoes, patting them down firmly with a spatula to flatten them and even out the edges. Cook over medium-high heat for about 8 min., till the bottom is golden. Invert the pancake onto a plate and add the remaining 2 T. of oil to the skillet to heat.

Slide the pancake back into the skillet. Pat it down again with the spatula and cook for another 8 min., or till the underside is golden. Invert onto a platter and cut into the desired number of slices.

## Roast Turkey

Makes 12 to 14 servings

You do not have to wait for Thanksgiving to serve this dish, as it is easy to make and quite tasty. I often serve it when I have many guests to feed.

## Ingredients:

14-lb. turkey  
3 T. freshly squeezed lemon juice  
3 T. low-sodium soy sauce  
Freshly ground black pepper  
1 c. freshly squeezed orange juice  
1 c. dry white wine  
2 onions  
5 sprigs rosemary  
5 T. unsalted margarine, melted

## Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Discard any excess fat from the turkey. Rinse it inside and out and pat dry with paper towels. Season the skin and the cavity with the lemon juice, soy sauce, and pepper. Combine the orange juice and wine in a measuring cup with a spout. (This makes pouring easier.) Thinly slice one of the onions and set it aside. Cut the other onion in quarters and place it in the cavity along with the rosemary sprigs. Brush the turkey with the margarine and place it on its side in a roasting pan. Scatter the sliced onion around the pan. Roast the turkey for 30 min., basting with the orange juice-wine mixture. Turn the turkey on its other side and roast for another 30 min., continuing to baste. Turn the turkey breast side up and, continuing to baste, roast for 20 min. For the final 20 min., place the turkey breast side down. (If the drumsticks begin to get too brown, cover the ends with foil.) The turkey is ready when the drumsticks move easily in their sockets



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and the juices run clear. (The total cooking time is about 1 hour, 40 min., or about 7 min. per pound.) A meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the breast should read 160. Remove the turkey from the oven and cover it tightly with heavy foil. Let it stand for 30 min. (This allows the juices to flow back into the tissues.) Place it on a cutting board. Pour the contents of the roasting pan into a sm. saucepan. Put the saucepan in the freezer for about 10 min., so the grease can quickly rise to the top. (This makes it easier to remove.) To serve: Skim off the fat and reheat the pan juices. Discard the onion and rosemary from the cavity and carve the turkey. Serve with the juices.

## Easy Brownies

Makes 7 dozen 1" squares

These fudgy bite-size brownies can be cut into any size.

## Ingredients:

16 T. unsalted margarine, at room temperature, plus 1 T. for greasing the pan  
1 c. unbleached all-purpose flour, plus 1 T. for dusting the pan  
5 oz. good-quality imported semisweet chocolate, broken into small pieces  
Scant 1-3/4 c. sugar  
4 lg. eggs, room temperature  
1 t. vanilla extract  
Generous 1 c. walnuts, coarsely chopped

## Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350. Line a 9" x 13" x 2" baking pan with wax paper. Grease the paper with 1 T. of the margarine and dust it with 1 T. of the flour. Invert and tap the pan to shake out the excess flour. Place the remaining margarine and the chocolate in the top of a double boiler. Cover and set over simmering water. Stir from time to time until all is melted. Remove the top from the double boiler. Using a wooden spoon, gradually add the sugar, stirring continuously till the chocolate is smooth. Stir in 1 egg at a time till well mixed. Add the vanilla and flour and blend well. Stir in the chopped nuts. Pour the batter into the prepared pan, tilting the pan to spread the batter evenly. Bake on the middle shelf of the oven for 20 minutes, or until the top is slightly firm to the touch and a cake tester inserted in the center comes out moist. Cool on a wire rack. Run a metal spatula around the sides of the pan to loosen the brownies. Invert the pan onto a board and cut into squares.

**Note:** These brownies freeze well. Place them side by side in an air-tight plastic container, with wax paper between the layers. ☆

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