

A CDC Thanksgiving



My husband and I have decided we will be following CDC guidelines for our Thanksgiving this year. I'm hoping this will be the only year we have to do this, but we can make the sacrifice. Another year will come.

I have gotten creative. I hope you like some of my ideas. It might be too late to use them this Thanksgiving, but the December holidays are right around the corner, and New Year's festivities are right after that.

I saw a short list of celebration guidelines early last week that gave 4 bullet points to follow. If you go to the CDC site right now you get ALL KINDS of detailed advice. It's clear people are looking for guidance and the CDC is trying to get as creative as possible. I'm just going to comment on the short list.

CDC Guideline #1: Only celebrate with those you live with on a daily basis. If you feel you can't keep it to that number, max it out at 10.

A lot of people are taking this recommendation to heart. Statistics show that 47% of people have decided not to travel for Thanksgiving. That's what we're doing. Our household is two

adults and two cats. It will just be the two of us for dinner this year. That got me thinking, if I made the usual dinner with a turkey and several sides, along with a couple of desserts, we'd be drowning in food! We'd never be able to eat it all and the leftovers would have to be frozen or given to others.

I came up with my first idea and began implementing it last week. I decided we'd sort of enjoy our meal in "courses" served over several days. Each dish would be served as part of a weeknight or weekend meal and we'd savor the flavors of each dish as that day came along. The dishes would not all be served with turkey, some with chicken, beef, or even other entrees. It's different, but so far it's working.

Last week I served the sweet potatoes with the butter pecan crust. I gave you that recipe but here it is again. It tasted just like Thanksgiving. It just came two weeks before the big day. I served it with a simple roasted chicken. We each got a big helping and there were enough leftovers for lunch the next day. Divine.

This weekend my husband said he had a hankering for dressing/stuffing. I made one from his childhood memories. He enjoyed it with gravy (me, not so much.) But I checked dressing off the list. You can see, I'm just working my way around the plate. Tonight, we will be enjoying two items. One is an appetizer I might serve at Thanksgiving. It's leek rings. All you do is make onion rings but use leeks instead. Sort of a gourmet onion ring. I'd normally serve them while folks are watching football. Then with our steak, we will be having creamed Yukon Gold Fingerlings. Super simple. Just boil up small potatoes (skin on), drain, and put back in the pan. Add some butter and get out your masher or a fork. These are purposely lumpy mashed potatoes. Sometimes I add a bit of cream while I mash them up. My husband insists on mashed potatoes on

Thanksgiving. Yet, this week I'll likely make two desserts. I have plans for a lower carb chocolate cheesecake and I'll pick up a pumpkin pie from a good bakery. I want to support them during these tough times.

So, we spread all of the items that would be on the buffet over a three week period. Hassle-free cooking and all the special flavors just spread out.

CDC Guideline #2: Have one person assigned to cook the food. That person should be wearing a mask at all times.

Well, that's easy. I don't know exactly what I will cook on the day, but I know a small turkey breast will be included. I'll probably make it Cajun and serve it with lemon pepper cream gravy. I might break out the peas. I save peas for special occasions. I know my husband will want more mashed potatoes and I'll still have cheesecake and/or pumpkin pie around. That's plenty of food for two adults.

CDC Guideline #3: Have one person serve the food. That person should be wearing a mask too.

We won't have an issue with this guideline either, but I love this idea. Instead of passing platters of food, it can all be set up in one area. One person wears a mask and handles all the utensils used to serve the food. People can keep their distance while waiting to get their food and then spread out to eat it. This might be one of those days when you eat with your plate on your lap instead of all sitting close at a table.

CDC Guideline #4: Use paper plates and utensils and just toss them when dinner is complete.

I hate this idea. We won't have to do it for just the two of us, but I can see the logic the CDC is trying to get across. You

won't need to have a bunch of people in the kitchen trying to clean up. They won't have to handle plates that have been held by other folks. The transmission rate is MUCH less likely if they can all just toss out their plate and utensils when they are done. I'd splurge and get the thicker plates or the ones that are like little cafeteria trays. At least they are sturdier. When I was a kid and graduated from drinking out of a plastic cup and was allowed to hold a real glass, I never wanted to look back. I even hate drinking out of plastic at sporting events. That's just me.

This will be a Thanksgiving that will go down in the history books for folks all over the country. Do your duty to protect those you love and even those you haven't met yet. It's just one day... during one very crazy year. Keep in mind that when this all clears up you could do it again. If I can spread our fancy meal over three weeks, you might consider finding a day in the summer where you make a repeat of your usual Thanksgiving and serve it outside as a picnic. Maybe you grill your turkey. That's the ticket!

Cheers and Thanksgiving blessings to you all,