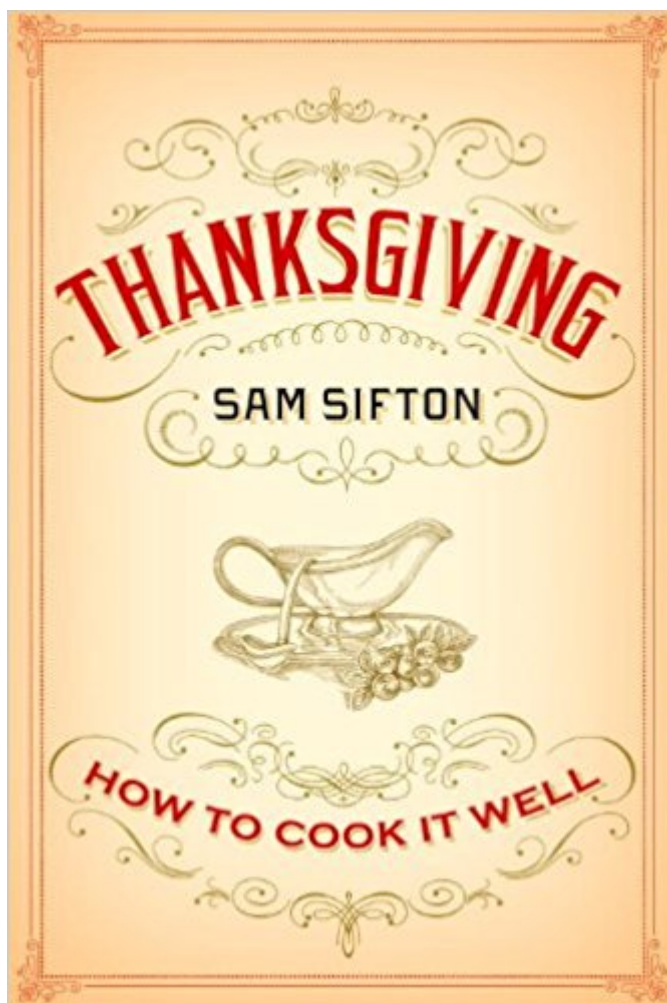


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# Thanksgiving: How To Cook It Well



## Synopsis

NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY EATER.COM From one of America's finest food writers, the former restaurant critic for The New York Times, comes a definitive, timeless guide to Thanksgiving dinner—preparing it, surviving it, and pulling it off in style. From the planning of the meal to the washing of the last plate, Thanksgiving poses more—and more vexing—problems for the home cook than any other holiday. In this smartly written, beautifully illustrated, recipe-filled book, Sam Sifton, the Times's resident Thanksgiving expert, delivers a message of great comfort and solace: There is no need for fear. You can cook a great meal on Thanksgiving. You can have a great time. With simple, fool-proof recipes for classic Thanksgiving staples, as well as new takes on old standbys, this book will show you that the fourth Thursday of November does not have to be a day of kitchen stress and family drama, of dry stuffing and sad, cratered pies. You can make a better turkey than anyone has ever served you in your life, and you can serve it with gravy that is not lumpy or bland but a salty balm, rich in flavor, that transforms all it touches. Here are recipes for exciting side dishes and robust pies and festive cocktails, instructions for setting the table and setting the mood, as well as cooking techniques and menu ideas that will serve you all year long, whenever you are throwing a big party. Written for novice and experienced cooks alike, *Thanksgiving: How to Cook It Well* is your guide to making Thanksgiving the best holiday of the year. It is not fantasy. If you prepare, it will happen. And this book will show you how. Advance praise for *Thanksgiving* — "If you don't have Thanksgiving, you are not really having Thanksgiving. This book is as essential to the day as the turkey itself. It's an expert, gently opinionated guide to everything from the cranberry sauce to the table setting to the divvying up of the leftovers, but it's also a paean to the holiday and an evocation of both its past and its promising future. Sam Sifton's Thanksgiving world is the one I want to live in." —Gabrielle Hamilton, bestselling author of *Blood, Bones, & Butter* — "The charm of Sam Sifton's Thanksgiving is that he proposes that home cooks treat this culinary Olympics like any other dinner party—don't panic, deconstruct your tasks into bite-size pieces, and conquer that fear of failure. Sam could talk a fledgling doctor through his first open-heart surgery. It's all here—from brining to spatchcocking, sides to desserts—and served up with a generous dollop of reassuring advice from one of America's most notable food writers." —Christopher Kimball, editor of *Cook's Illustrated* and host of America's Test Kitchen

## Book Information

Hardcover: 160 pages

Publisher: Random House (October 23, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1400069912

ISBN-13: 978-1400069910

Product Dimensions: 5.7 x 0.7 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 93 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #482,503 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Entertaining & Holidays > Thanksgiving #298 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Entertaining & Holidays > Holidays #704 in Books > Reference > Encyclopedias & Subject Guides > Cooking

## Customer Reviews

No national holiday preserves traditions as rigorously observed as the foods of America's Thanksgiving Day. In fact, it's impossible to imagine the fourth Thursday of November without turkey, cranberries, and pumpkin pie. Sifton, former food critic for the New York Times, sets out to find the best rendition of the time-honored Thanksgiving dinner. He's not interested in introducing some trendy new food into the feast, just in steering readers to carefully crafted versions of customary holiday favorites. Sifton quickly inventories essential kitchen equipment for the dinner. He enumerates the sorts of turkeys currently in markets and gives a handful of recipes with varying cooking techniques. A host of different stuffings and side dishes complements the bird. Traditional American desserts conclude the meal. He even details how to set a table, recognizing it as a nearly lost art in today's world. This is a good resource for any cook not already bound to fixed and inflexible Thanksgiving menus. --Mark Knoblauch

Advance praise for Thanksgiving "If you don't have Thanksgiving, you are not really having Thanksgiving. This book is as essential to the day as the turkey itself. It's an expert, gently opinionated guide to everything from the cranberry sauce to the table setting to the divvying up of the leftovers, but it's also a paean to the holiday and an evocation of both its past and its promising future. Sam Sifton's Thanksgiving world is the one I want to live in." Gabrielle Hamilton, bestselling author of Blood, Bones, & Butter "The charm of Sam Sifton's Thanksgiving is that he proposes that home cooks treat this culinary Olympics like any other dinner party: don't panic, deconstruct your tasks into bite-size pieces, and conquer that fear of failure.

Sam could talk a fledgling doctor through his first open-heart surgery. It's all here -- from brining to spatchcocking, sides to desserts -- and served up with a generous dollop of reassuring advice from one of America's most notable food writers. • Christopher Kimball, editor of *Cook's Illustrated* and host of America's Test Kitchen

If you are looking for gluten-free, fat-free, and sugar-free recipes, this book is not for you. But if you are looking for wonderful traditional Thanksgiving fare done in the most hassle-free and delicious way, this book is for you. I love it. No salad -- who needs something cold with all that warm goodness? I used this book exclusively to make my Thanksgiving dishes this year to rave reviews and not even one single suggestion of how I could have improved it. And my family of chefs and foodies will let you know if it isn't just perfect. I recommend this book with absolutely no reservations.

I bought this book because I have been making the Thanksgiving meal for my family for the last 15+ years and because I tried and enjoyed several of Mr. Sifton's recipes that were offered in *Bon Appetit's* 2012 Thanksgiving issue. While I appreciated the fact that Mr. Sifton expresses a definite point of view and ultimately found this to be enjoyable reading, I'm not giving this book a glowing review for the following reasons: (1) for 2 years in a row now, following Mr. Sifton's recipe, my turkey has roasted much faster than what Mr. Sifton estimates for a 12-16 pound bird -- my 14-15 pound turkeys have completely roasted (with the internal temperature reaching 165 degrees) in about 2-1/2 hours versus the 4 hours that the book says; (2) because of the previous issue, the whole timing of my meal preparation becomes completely thrown off, which is a situation that I wish this book would have addressed since, after all, the difficulty in pulling off this culinary feat is not in the preparation of any particular dish but rather in getting ALL of the components of the meal finished, hot and on the table at the same time; and (3) my favorite recipe from the November 2012 *Bon Appetit* for Turkey and Mushroom Risotto (using the leftovers) isn't even included in the book. I'm still glad I have this book as a resource, but I do think it could've been so much better....

We prepared the turkey, fresh bread dressing, cranberry sauce and a couple more recipes out of Sam's book this last Thanksgiving. Boy, oh boy! Fantastic. I love his philosophy of staying traditional and going all-out for this important meal. But be fear not, nothing here was difficult. Our whole family, including our two small kids, reeled in delight at the results.

This is your no nonsense cookbook. If you just want to know how to cook the best Thanksgiving meal this is the book for you. Its also a great read which is part of the cookbook experience. It covers the turkey, sides, dessert, table setting and even tips on getting everyone to help with the clean up! I bought a couple as gifts and am going to buy a few more, anyone who celebrates Thanksgiving would be a happy recipient of this book. A must have!

Easy reading good suggestions. Upbeat.

Filled with great advice, and made me laugh out loud several times. Clearly written by someone who has a true love of Thanksgiving, and of writing.

Siftons tome on Thanksgiving is an excellent primer for anyone from the Thanksgiving host newbie to anyone with enough experience to have Thanksgiving on automatic pilot. His advice as to no garlic and no appetizers is spot on. I do however take one HUGE exception. Who, in their cotton picking, southern fried mind would ever put sugar in cornbread that was to be used for dressing. I'll grant a yankee their sugared cornbread to placate the kids or to eat alongside spicy chili. But, the thought of sweet cornbread with onions, celery, Bell's seasoning, gobs of black pepper and Jimmy Dean Hot and Sage sausage in my dressing was enough to gag me with the Sunday edition of the Times. That said, I'm giving copies to my daughter and daughter-in-law. I'll be telling them to take it with a grain of salt (just no sugar). Did I just give away my dressing recipe??

Best succinct cookbook - read it like a novel and if you look hard enough, will find a great gumbo recipe!

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