

Thanksgiving & Dietary Restrictions

Planning A Meal to Accommodate All Your Guests

Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and you're likely excited to be able to host a feast for your loved ones. However, you may need to accommodate a range of special dietary needs and preferences for your guests. Ease your concerns about menu planning by learning about these five common special diets and allergens, along with tips and menu ideas to help you accommodate everyone at the table.

VEGETARIANS

One of the most common dietary choices to consider are people who don't eat meat (Vegetarians). Bear in mind that they may eat other animal products, such as milk, eggs, cheese, and butter. While mashed potatoes, sweet potato casserole, green bean casserole, and other holiday favorites are already vegetarian, you'll need to use vegetable broth instead of chicken broth in your recipes. Consider making a meatless stuffing and serve plenty of plant-based protein sides, such as lentils, beans, and tofu.

CELIAC DISEASE

Whether someone avoids wheat products by choice or has Celiac Disease, a gluten-free diet eliminates all forms of wheat, including farro, einkorn, spelt, barley, rye, and some oats. Fortunately, people on a gluten-free diet can still enjoy Thanksgiving turkey and mashed potatoes. However, it is important to make a flour-free gravy and use gluten-free ingredients for stuffing and other dishes. For example, you can use gluten-free sourdough or cornbread for stuffing and alternative flours, such as chickpea, brown rice, and almond flour, when possible.

VEGANS

Often confused with vegetarians, vegans avoid all animal products, including meat, dairy, eggs, and honey. This means that they will not eat the turkey or any other dish that contains animal products.

However, there are many hearty and delicious vegan Thanksgiving sides that you can serve. You can also easily "veganize" many classic dishes by substituting plant-based ingredients for dairy and eggs. For example, you can use nut milk instead of cow's milk in mashed potatoes, and vegan butter or oil instead of butter for roasting vegetables.

If you want to serve a vegan dessert, there are a few extra steps you may need to take. For example, you may need to use chia or flax eggs instead of chicken eggs, or soak nuts to make a thick, creamy base for a custard pie or buttery cookies. There are also many delicious vegan dessert recipes available online and in cookbooks.



Thanksgiving & Dietary Restrictions, continued...

PALEO

The Paleo Diet is a dietary pattern that mimics the diet of our hunter-gatherer ancestors. It eliminates refined sugars, grains, legumes, and dairy products, and focuses on whole, unprocessed foods like meat, fish, eggs, nuts, seeds, fruits, vegetables, and fats like olive oil and avocado.

You can ensure that a guest who follows a Paleo diet has plenty to eat by making a few changes. First, avoid using marshmallows in your sweet potato casserole. Instead, use a naturally sweet ingredient like maple syrup or honey. Second, add a couple of naturally-sweetened and wheat-free desserts to the menu. For example, you could make a Paleo pumpkin pie or Paleo chocolate chip cookies.

KETO

The Keto Diet is a low-carb, high-fat diet that helps the body burn fat for energy. People on the Keto Diet avoid foods that are high in carbohydrates, such as fruit, legumes, root vegetables, granulated and brown sugar, and grains. Instead, they eat foods that are high in fat, such as meat, fish, eggs, cheese, butter, nuts, seeds, and avocados.

To accommodate a guest on the Keto Diet, avoid serving any dishes that are high in carbohydrates, such as bread, rolls, mashed potatoes, and sweet potato casserole. Instead, focus on serving dishes that are high in fat and protein, such as roasted turkey, grilled salmon, and steamed broccoli. You can also offer a variety of keto-friendly appetizers and snacks, such as cheese and crackers, nuts and seeds, and hard-boiled eggs.

One thing that all your guests can share are words of gratitude and thankfulness for their many blessings. Happy Thanksgiving!



Holiday Sorbet

Gluten free, dairy free, and vegan!

Strawberry Sorbet

4 cups strawberries hulled and quartered
 ½ cup granulated sugar see notes
 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Combine the berries and sugar in a mixing bowl. Set aside, covered, until the sugar is mostly dissolved into a syrup. Transfer the mixture to a blender or food processor, add the lemon juice, and puree until smooth. Transfer the sorbet into a freezable container and freeze for 1-2 hours. Before serving, allow to soften a few minutes.

Not a fan of strawberries? You can make a wide range of sorbets with fruit—from mango to lemon. Just Google 'sorbet' for recipes and enjoy!

