



Going Turkey-Free: 6 Alternatives to Turkey for Thanksgiving

When you think of Thanksgiving dinner, there's a good chance that the image of a turkey comes to mind. And with good reason—approximately 46 million turkeys are eaten every Thanksgiving! However, if you don't care for turkey—either the taste or the hassle of cooking one—or if you have a vegetarian guest, you may be looking for something to serve besides the classic bird dish. Here are 6 non-traditional Thanksgiving dinner ideas!

Beef

Instead of spending all the time it takes to prep and cook a turkey, use the time to make your favorite special-occasion beef dish instead. Brisket, pot roast, and tri-tip all make hearty main dishes, and pair perfectly with traditional Thanksgiving sides like potatoes and vegetables.

Mac & Cheese

Who said mac & cheese needs to be a side dish, anyway? Elevate the dish by adding broccoli or other vegetables, bacon or prosciutto, or top with bread crumbs for a new take on an old classic. If your guests have dietary restrictions, make it with gluten-free noodles or non-dairy cheese, and you'll please everyone.

Pot Pie or Shepherd's Pie

There's nothing like slicing into a savory pie and trying to guess what delicious vegetables or meats you might find! Make either option vegetarian by simply leaving out the meat. While these make great entree replacements for turkey, they are also wonderful options to cook after Thanksgiving to use up any leftover vegetables or meat.

Lasagna

Lasagna is a popular alternate entree thanks to the fact that you can prepare it the day before and just pop it in the oven, saving you time while you make sides and dessert—or allowing you to spend more time with your guests. Make it seasonable by adding pumpkin puree or butternut squash for an earthy flavor—it's not only delicious but it sneaks in an extra serving of vegetables.

Pork Tenderloin

Serve a different white meat—roast tenderloin with herbs and spices can easily

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tenderloin with herbs and spices can easily take the place of a traditional turkey meal. Use a recipe that pairs the pork with apples or pears to experience some delicious fall flavors.

Vegan Turkey Substitute

The quality of meat substitutes have really improved over the years, and now there are several companies who produce turkey-like products made from soy or wheat gluten. Some even come as roasts, filled with stuffing and cranberries. Most grocery stores in San Diego stock a version or two; check the frozen aisle in the vegetarian section and give one a try!

Cook one of these turkey alternatives this year, and save the other suggestions for future Thanksgivings. With ideas like these, your guests will never miss the bird!

