

It's Thanksgiving Ya'll...

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I do it every year. The week leading up to Thanksgiving I cram. Every night after the kids and husband go to bed, I sit with pen and paper in hand, staring at the TV, taking detailed notes. The Food Network becomes my CNN news feed. Tyler Florence, Paula Deen and Ina Garten bring me updates on all things Thanksgiving like Diane Sawyer, Katie Couric and Brian Williams keep viewers abreast of all the latest news.



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Speaking of breasts, did you know that more than 200 million pounds of turkey breasts are consumed during Thanksgiving? That's just a sample of what I've learned during my cram sessions.

Now onto my planned Thanksgiving feast courtesy of The Food Network, or what my husband calls, "The fast, easy way to drive yourself nuts before a single relative walks through the door and asks, 'what's that smell?'"

They make it look so easy. According to Paula, all I need to make the holidays complete is "moar reel buuuutr." By the end of her Thanksgiving special I'm saying things like, "Boys, get yo' mama the buttr. I think these Fruit Loops will be a mighty bit tastier if we put a big dollop on top." After a few days of this and my husband finally says it's not that funny and the next time I say, "my pecan pie is gonna make yo' tongue fly outta yo' mouth and smack yo-self." He's going to leave me alone Thanksgiving Day with my entire family and his. I obliged.

I did come away with some very handy cooking tips courtesy of Ms. Deen. One, real butter does make everything taste better. And just because you exaggerate a southern drawl doesn't mean you can intelligently explain that a turducken is not a cross hibernation of three birds but rather the main dish for the Andrews' Thanksgiving feast.

The weekend before Thanksgiving I was preparing my grocery list. Everything I needed for cornbread sausage stuffing according to Tyler Florence including 12 spices I've never heard of. I'm convinced Ina Garten's recipe for Pear Clafouti will be a crowd pleaser even though my mother-in-law says, "people won't eat what they can't pronounce." And if my guests don't particularly care for those, my fried macaroni and cheese compliments of Deen will be sure to win them over... Or raise their cholesterol 100 points.

With the shopping done and my turducken safely resting in the fridge I finally have a few minutes to rest before the rush of activity begins on Wednesday night. For fun I decide to try out one of the new recipes on my kids. I summon them to the kitchen where each child can taste a sample of what is sure to be an Andrews' family tradition, cranberry pudding. Halfway down the stairs both say, "Ugggh! What's that smell?" Maybe not.

No matter what I'll continue to cram for the holiday cooking season. And I'll always remember that Thanksgiving is not about the food you cook but about the people gathered around your table refusing to eat it. Happy Thanksgiving Ya'll!

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