



dining with skyler <sup>SM</sup>

**THANKSGIVING  
DINNER PARTY  
GUIDE**

# — THANKSGIVING MENU —

## S A L A D

**brussels sprouts, squash, pomegranate,  
parmesan, tahini dijon dressing**

## S I D E   D I S H E S

**creamy mashed potatoes**


**baked brie stuffing**

## E N T R É E

**braised chicken and gravy**

## D E S S E R T

**cranberry pumpkin pie with  
salted dulce de leche**




Welcome to my Thanksgiving dinner party guide! In order to master the timing of all of these recipes, I recommend watching my YouTube episode which breaks down what recipes and ingredients to prep on which days. I put time stamps on the video to break up each portion of the prep so it's easy to follow as well!

In my opinion, there are 2 different ways to go about Thanksgiving or Friendsgiving. 1) You can make everything yourself or 2) You can make this a potluck style dinner and delegate different dishes. The good news is that no matter which you decide, you can use this guide to get you through! If you're going with a potluck style, send this to your friends to follow the recipes. If you want to do it all yourself, watch the tutorial on how to make everything in the proper timeline and refer to these recipes when making the dishes. You've got this!!

In the following pages, you'll find all the recipes included on the menu. At the end, I have some added suggestions for appetizers and side dishes if you want to amp this up even more. You can find those extra recipes on my Instagram account.

Have a WONDERFUL Thanksgiving! I am thankful for all of you and hope you enjoy this delicious menu!

xx- Skyler  
@diningwithskyler



A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with creamy, yellow mashed potatoes. Two pats of butter are melting on top, and a small amount of black pepper is sprinkled over the surface. The bowl sits on a light-colored, possibly marble, plate. The background is a warm, wooden surface.

recipe & prep list  
**MASHED POTATOES**  
*make up to a month ahead*

Nothing is better than classic mashed potatoes, and you can make these up to a month ahead of time! I prefer making them the week ahead and freezing until the day before the big day. These are smooth, luscious, creamy mashed potatoes similar to those you'd find in a steak house. Use my recipe as is, or add some of your own favorite seasonings or aromatics to make it your own. This recipe calls for a potato ricer for the ultimate fluffy results and I promise, it's worth the purchase!

# CLASSIC MASHED POTATOES (MY FAVORITE RECIPE EVER)

**Serves: 10-12**

## INGREDIENTS

- 5 lb Russet potatoes
- 3 cups heavy cream (or more as needed, I recommend buying a quart)
- 2 sticks unsalted butter, cubed (I recommend a good brand for this such as Kerrygold)
- Salt, to taste
- Ground white pepper, to taste
- Garlic powder, to taste

## INSTRUCTIONS:

Fill a stock pot with cold water. Peel and cut each potato into 8 pieces.

Place the potatoes in the cold water as you work to prevent oxidizing. When complete, make sure the potatoes are covered by three to five inches of water. Bring to a boil and add 3 tablespoons of salt.

Reduce heat to a simmer and cook the potatoes until fork tender, about 10-15 minutes. Check on them at 10 minutes to be safe as you don't want them too mushy.

While the potatoes are cooking, combine the cream and 1 1/2 sticks of butter in a sauce pot. Scald the cream-butter mixture by bringing it to a boil. Whisk as it rises in the pot, and turn off the heat. Cover to keep it warm at the back of the stove.

Once the potatoes are cooked drain them in a colander and place them back in the dry pot. Place the pot back on the stove top over medium heat. Stirring constantly, "dry-steam" the potatoes for 3-4 minutes to release the excess moisture. They should be slightly crumbly.


Pass the cooked potatoes through a potato ricer or the fine disk of a food mill. Reheat the cream and butter mixture if it cooled down. Add the cream and butter mixture, as needed, to the potatoes and mix with a whisk until smooth. Do not add it all at once. Season with salt, white pepper and garlic powder. If needed, heat more cream and butter and add it for a smoother consistency.

Let the potatoes cool to room temperature before storing in plastic bags to freeze for up to 1 month. Thaw in the fridge 1 day before you plan to serve them.

### **TO REHEAT IN THE MICROWAVE:**

**My favorite way to reheat mashed potatoes in in the microwave because it's so easy and quick. Place the potatoes in a microwave safe dish. Microwave for 1 minute increments until warm throughout, then change to 30 second increments. Whisk between each 30 second increment to re-incorporate the liquid. At first, the mixture will seem liquidy but don't panic, once they are heated throughout and you whisk them together they will become nice and fluffy. Revive the potatoes with a small splash of cream and whisk until smooth and creamy. Cover with foil and place to stay warm until serving or cover with foil and place in a low heat oven to keep warm until serving.**



A close-up photograph of a slice of pumpkin pie. The pie has a golden-brown crust, a thick orange filling, and a layer of red cranberry sauce. It is topped with a dollop of white whipped cream and a drizzle of dark brown dulce de leche. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

recipe & prep list

## **CRANBERRY PUMPKIN PIE WITH SALTED DULCE DE LECHE**

*make up to 2 days before*

I'm a firm believer in outsourcing a classic pumpkin pie from the grocery store and if you're taking the time to make one at home, it should have some \*pizzazz.\* So, enter this fun recipe that's surprisingly easy. Layers of flavor include: classic pie crust, tart cranberry sauce, custardy pumpkin filling, and a salted dulce de leche drizzle on top. Feel free to make this recipe without the spins for a classic pumpkin pie as well! Make this the day before your party. If you can't find canned dulce de leche, you can swap for your favorite store bought caramel or make it on your own.

# CRANBERRY PUMPKIN PIE WITH SALTED DULCE DE LECHE

**Serves: 1 9-inch pie**

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 (9-inch) pre-made pie crust
- 1 (15-ounce) can pure pumpkin puree
- 1 cup cranberry sauce (I use jelly cranberry sauce in the can but you can use homemade as well)
- 3/4 cup dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 large eggs
- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 can dulce de leche for drizzling (store-bought or homemade)
- Whipped cream, for serving

## INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).

Place the pre-made 9-inch pie crust into a pie dish. Or if using a pre-made frozen crust in foil, let it thaw until pliable. Prick the bottom of the pie crust with a fork to prevent it from puffing up during baking.

Place a piece of parchment paper into the pie and add dried beans or pie weights. Bake the pie crust in the preheated oven for about 10 minutes, or until it is lightly golden. Remove the pie weights. Add back to the oven and bake for 5 minutes to brown the bottom. Remove from the oven and let it cool.

Lower the oven temperature to 350°F (175°C).



In a large mixing bowl, combine the pumpkin puree, brown sugar, ground cinnamon, ground ginger, ground nutmeg, vanilla extract, and salt. Mix until well combined. Taste for seasoning and adjust if preferred. Add the eggs and whisk. Then, add the sweetened condensed milk and stir until combined.

Add cranberry sauce to a microwavable dish. Microwave for 30 seconds to loosen up the chunks and make it more spreadable. Once the pie crust has cooled, spread an even layer of cranberry sauce over the bottom of the crust. I make mine 1/2-1 inch thick.

Pour the pumpkin filling over the cranberry layer in the pie crust. You may have some left over filling mixture (I erred on the side of caution incase some people are using a deep dish pan.)

Place the pie in the 350°F (175°C) oven and bake for 45-50 minutes, or until the pie filling is set, slightly puffed up and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Allow the pie to cool completely to room temperature before storing covered in the fridge.

When serving, remove from the fridge about an hour prior. Open the dulce de leche and add it to a microwaveable bowl. Season with salt, to taste (I did a generous pinch.) Microwave in 30 second increments until drizzle-able. Place this salted dulce de leche on the counter next to the pie when serving. Let guests drizzle it and top with whipped cream to their tastes.



recipe & prep list

## **BAKED BRIE STUFFING**

*make 1 day before*

I'm biased, but this might be the best stuffing you'll ever have. I made this recipe on a whim back in 2019 and it's become a family staple since! There's a crusty and soft baguette base tossed with a creamy chicken stock, lots of herbs and chunks of creamy, melty brie. Make this the day before Thanksgiving and reheat in the oven with the other side dishes and your roast chicken before serving.

## BAKED BRIE STUFFING

*NOTE: use a deep 9 x 13 baking dish to get the most out of this recipe and serve 12! Or divide between two smaller baking dishes.*

*Serves: 6-8*

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 large baguettes ripped into pieces
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 1 white onion, small dice
- 4 stalks celery, small dice
- Kosher salt for seasoning throughout
- 4 cloves garlic minced
- 3 tablespoons fresh parsley finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons fresh sage finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh rosemary finely chopped
- 3 cups chicken stock (plus more if needed— buy the whole 4 cup carton)
- 4 oz. softened cream cheese
- 2 eggs beaten together
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 12 oz. brie cut into small cubes — can add up to 16 oz (2 standard wheels)
- Whole Cranberry cranberry sauce optional\*

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

In a skillet over medium heat, melt half of the butter. Add the onion and celery with a generous pinch of kosher salt. Sauté for 5 minutes, until softened and fragrant.

Add 2 more tbsp of the butter, then add the garlic and all of the herbs. Season with another generous pinch of kosher salt. Sauté for 2-3 minutes until the garlic is fragrant. Adjust the heat to low.

Pour in the chicken broth. Let it heat for 2-3 minutes, just before boiling. Add the cream cheese and whisk until creamy. Once combined, taste the mixture and add salt if needed.

Pour the baguette pieces into a large mixing bowl or directly into a 9 x 13 buttered baking dish.

Slowly add the creamy herb mixture to the bread. Use about 2/3 of it, then toss together. If the bread still feels dry, add the rest of the mixture and toss. If you want it more wet, slowly add stock from the carton and continue checking for texture. (This process is different for everyone because baguettes are made in different sizes.) Once the bread reaches a consistency you prefer, toss with the eggs.

Nestle the brie cubes into the stuffing, adding some about halfway down the baking dish and the rest on the top. Make sure to evenly spread so you get Brie in every bite!

Cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes.

Adjust the heat to 400 degrees F. Remove the foil and bake for another 15 minutes uncovered. During this second bake, you'll bake your butternut squash for the salad on the bottom rack as well.

**Let it come to room temperature before covering with foil and storing in the fridge.**

**TO REHEAT:**

**Cover with foil and place in the oven with the chicken for 15-20 minutes, until warmed throughout and cheese is melty.**



recipe & prep list

## **THANKSGIVING SALAD**

*prepare 1 day before, assemble right before serving*

This is like if a caesar salad married a fall harvest salad and had a beautiful baby. The flavor is outstanding and it's really easy to throw together. Roast the butternut squash the day before (while you're making the baked brie stuffing) so that on Thanksgiving day, you can simply compile the salad right before your guests arrive. Then, dress it right before serving. Pro tip: if you can find pomegranate arils that are already removed from the fruit, buy those to make your life easier!

## THANKSGIVING SALAD

**Serves: 10-12**

FOR THE SALAD:

***PREP NOTE:** Roast the butternut squash during the second bake for the baked brie stuffing to maximize time! Let it cool and store in the fridge until using it.*

- 1 large butternut squash, medium dice, roasted until tender
- 2 pounds raw Brussels sprouts, trimmed and shredded (or just buy the Brussels sprouts pre-shredded)
- 2 cups thinly sliced Parmesan cheese (plus more to taste, if desired)
- 1 1/2 cups pomegranate arils (seeds from 1-2 pomegranates)

FOR THE DIJON TAHINI DRESSING:

***PREP NOTE:** Make this the day before serving and store in the fridge to make assembling the salad easier!*

- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1/3 cup tahini
- 2 tbsp sherry vinegar
- 1/2 cup water (adjust for desired consistency)
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Salt, to taste (if desired)

INSTRUCTIONS:

FOR THE SQUASH (make the day ahead with the stuffing:)

*Preheat the oven to 400°F. As noted above, the most time efficient way to roast the squash is during the second bake for the baked brie stuffing, so I would recommend planning that accordingly.*

*Toss the squash with a bit of olive oil, salt, and pepper.*



Spread the butternut squash cubes in a single layer on a baking sheet and roast in the preheated oven for 25-30 minutes, or until tender and slightly caramelized. Remove from the oven and allow them to cool to room temperature. Store in the fridge on a plate, covered with foil until the following day.


#### **FOR THE DRESSING:**

**In a bowl, whisk together the Dijon mustard, tahini, sherry vinegar, and water until well combined. Add more water if necessary to thin it out. Add freshly ground black pepper to taste. You can also add a pinch of salt if desired, but remember that the Parmesan cheese will also contribute saltiness to the salad.**

#### **FOR THE SALAD:**

***PREP NOTE:** Chop all your ingredients when your squash is in the oven, then store in the fridge until ready to assemble the following day.*

*Assemble the shredded brussels sprouts, most of the Parmesan, pomegranate arils and roasted squash in a bowl. Toss with the dressing right before serving. Top with more pomegranate arils, parmesan slices and black pepper for garnish.*



recipe & prep list

## **BRAISED CHICKEN WITH GRAVY**

*prepare ingredients day before, cook 3 hours before party*

Gone are the days of dried turkey that you have to babysit to make sure its cooking properly. And enter...the most gourmet braised chicken that will put turkey to shame. I love this recipe because you can ask your guests if they prefer white or dark meat and then tailor it to their tastes. If guests like dark meat, go with chicken thighs and/or drumsticks. If guests like white meat, go with bone in and skin-on chicken breasts. Get this recipe done a few hours ahead of your party and let the chicken sit in the oven until you're ready to serve.

## BRAISED CHICKEN AND GRAVY

**Serves: 10-12**

### FOR THE CHICKEN:

**NOTE:** *Ask your guests if they like white or dark meat, and choose the meat accordingly! White meat is for chicken breasts and dark meat is for chicken thighs and/or drumsticks. I split this recipe 50/50, but you can adjust accordingly. Make sure you use large chicken thighs.*

- 6 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
- 6 bone-in, skin-on chicken breasts (split, so you have 12 pieces in total)
- Salt, for seasoning
- Freshly ground black pepper, for seasoning
- Oil for pan if necessary
- 1 large white onion, small dice
- 2-3 large carrots, peeled and diced
- 4 stalks of celery, diced
- 1/2 cup tomato paste
- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 6-8 cups chicken stock (plus more if needed to cover the chicken)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 3 whole thyme sprigs

### FOR THE GRAVY:

- 1/4 cup unsalted butter
- 3 1/2 tbsp all-purpose flour

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

Season the chicken pieces generously with salt and black pepper. In a large Dutch oven on medium high heat, brown the chicken skin until fat is rendered and skin is golden brown. Work in batches until complete. Remove from the heat. Adjust the heat to medium.


In the same Dutch oven, add the mirepoix (onions, carrots, and celery) and sauté until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes. If the pan is dry, add a splash of oil to lubricate the veggies.

Adjust the heat to medium high. Stir in the tomato paste and Dijon mustard and create a thin layer on the bottom of the dutch oven. Cook for a couple of minutes to toast the tomato paste and incorporate the flavors. It should be golden brown. Stir every 30 seconds-1 minute to prevent burning. Once substantial golden brown bits form, deglaze with dry white wine. Allow wine to simmer for a few minutes and reduce.

Add 4 cups of chicken stock to the pot and let it simmer. Taste for seasoning and adjust if necessary. Add the browned chicken pieces to two baking dishes or one large roasting pan, placing them skin-side up. Pour the liquid into 2 9x13 baking dishes or one large roast pan. The liquid should cover the meat up to the skin, do not cover the skin. If you need more liquid, add the stock.

Place the chicken in the oven on the middle rack for 1.5-2 hours. Check on the chicken after 30 minutes to make sure the skin is not burning. If the skin is changing color, cover the chicken with foil and continue baking. After 2 hours, adjust the heat to 275 and let it sit until ready to serve. I left mine in the oven for up to 4 hours and it resulted in tender, delicious meat! Once ready to serve, change the temperature back to 325 and reheat for 15-20 minutes with the stuffing and potatoes.

Once the chicken is done, remove it and plate. Prepare the gravy by straining the cooking liquid into a bowl. In a sauce pan, melt the butter on medium heat. Stir in the flour to create a roux. Let it cook, while stirring and bubbling, for 2 minutes until combined. It should have the consistency of very wet sand. If it seems too thick, add more butter. Slowly whisk in the hot chicken liquid until a gravy forms. If the mixture is too thick, add more stock and adjust seasoning to taste. If the mixture is too thin, turn the heat on high and reduce it until thickened. The mixture should coat the back of a spoon. Pour the gravy into a gravy boat and serve with the chicken. Save some gravy for the mashed potatoes if desired, as well.



I hope your Thanksgiving party goes off without a hitch! I designed this menu as if I were cooking for my friends and family and I hope you enjoy these recipes that honor the classics while adding some fun innovation.

You can serve each dish whenever your heart is content, but here's what I would do if I were hosting!

If your guests offer to bring anything, I would tell them to bring wine or drinks of their choice! Or, you can split this menu up amongst friends and delegate the side dishes and salad so the dinner is more of a potluck style. If you want even more appetizers and side dishes to serve with this menu, here are a few suggestions, which you can find on my Instagram in a Thanksgiving highlight.

1. French onion soup baked brie
2. Roasted rainbow carrots with whipped feta and harissa honey
3. Cacio e pepe smashed potatoes
4. French onion soup baked ziti
5. Thanksgiving salad (with caramelized onions, truffle brie, almonds, arugula, squash and parsley)
6. Garlic and scallion potatoes au gratin
7. Cheddar, pimento and scallion cornbread

Thanks for trusting me with your Thanksgiving! I hope you enjoyed this recipe booklet and my YouTube tutorial walking you through each recipe and how to prep accordingly. If you did like this menu, feel free to share with your friends and family so they can use my guides for their parties as well. See you in October!

xx- Skyler  
@diningwithskyer

