



Destitute Diaries

HOW TO MANAGE LIVING ON YOUR OWN: THANKSGIVING

BY SUMMER BARRAZA
MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Previously, on the Destitute Diaries, we discussed transportation and how to save money getting to where you need to be. This week, it's the holidays y'all, and what better way to showcase to your family that you're good on your own by hosting your very own poor college student Thanksgiving (courtesy of Destitute Diaries of course.) Here are a few tricks to make Thanksgiving worth it for you, your friends, your family and for your Christmas present budget this year.

Bulk up on veggies: Thanksgiving is focused on carbs and protein with very little input of vegetables. This year, go out and purchase store-brand frozen or canned vegetables in bulk to make up for the lack of protein or carbs you can't afford, physically and fiscally. Winco has decently priced frozen and canned vegetables for under a dollar. Of course vegetables aren't all that special during the holidays, especially Thanksgiving, so what you're going to do is douse them in butter until your tongue forgets they're healthy. I suggest Imperial brand stick margarine because it's cheaper than store brand and easier to spread and cut.

Potluck it: When I was little, my great-grandmother at the age of 90 use to whip up the entire Thanksgiving dinner all by herself. My great-

grandmother also grew up during the Great Depression and knew how to save money so she could afford to feed three different families in the future. She was hardcore. Don't be like my grandma (rest in peace), and ask your guests to bring a dessert, small appetizer or side dish to your Thanksgiving.

Keep it simple: The more extravagance you add to your feast, the more it will cost. Some people will purchase ham, steak or salmon for their Thanksgiving feasts, but just remember your student loans you have to pay off and you'll be humbled very quick. Most Thanksgiving dishes consist of canned foods anyways - think about greenbean casseroles! You have your cream of mushroom soup - canned; your greenbeans - canned; your bleached enriched noodles - not canned but it was 97 cents at Winco in bulk and you just had to buy it because you're such a huge fan of Destitute Diaries and don't want to disappoint me.

Maybe turkey isn't it: Ditching the centerpiece of a Thanksgiving feast is also an option. Make a statement this year by switching birds! A few cornish game hens give your guests the opportunity to have their own protein and gorge themselves on the side dishes you or your guests poured their hearts into. Cornish



Photos by Jonathan Villagomez

On Tuesday, Nov. 20, the Cougar Cave received a huge pre-Thanksgiving donation from Safeway.

hens average around \$2 each at Winco. Maybe it's not ideal for a bigger guest list, so go for a store brand turkey, but definitely cut down by having individual hens for each person if it's a small guest list.

Soup kitchens: Get rid of the stigma of soup kitchens! Not everyone who goes is poor, not everyone who goes is homeless. You can volunteer your time at the local soup kitchen on Thanksgiving because being low income isn't just about your wallet, you can also become low-income at the heart and soul. Enrich your heart and soul by donating time, eating a free meal with the people you helped and possibly create a tradition. Also, the Cougar Cave is offering free food just before Thanksgiving!

Have it delivered: There are some nonprofit organizations out there that can personally deliver a box full of Thanksgiving goodies to your door step. Take advantage of this if even if you are hesitating on getting one, you probably do need one! Local religious organizations or even schools might offer these boxes, so be sure to check in and see where you can get your box of goodies.

Leftovers: Of course this is afterward, but if you're worried about feeding yourself a few

days after the feast, save up leftovers. You can eat turkey sandwiches everyday, or even combine certain foods to create new ones. Online they have tons of recipes for reusing Thanksgiving leftovers to create something new and refreshing.

Consistency with ingredients: As mentioned before a lot of dishes for Thanksgiving all have cheap ingredients, but the important part is to find the common ingredients in all of those dishes. You can do a lot with those ingredients and make more with what you have. Milk can go into almost anything, same with butter and bread.

The holidays can be rough, especially if you are on your own. Some personal advice from me to you would be to participate in your community; call your family and friends and let them know that you're thinking about them - because no matter how much money you save, they will support you. Write down a list of all the things you are grateful for and remember that even though you are stuck in this hard time fiscally, it will pay off and that people are appreciative of you. Don't let your spirit be low-income.

Happy Thanksgiving, y'all.



ON THE COVER: Staff, students and community take a pumpkin spice v. eggnog taste test in the Bill Brod Community Center on Nov. 19. Photos by Jonathan Villagomez. Design by William Farris.



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