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home and she tried hundreds of recipes. There were few failures in Val's kitchen.

Her three growing boys carried Neanderthal appetites. My sister was demure in those days and thought more about horses than food or boys.

In the early days, Dad, one of two doctors on the Peninsula, dominated the north end of our long, trestle-like table where his springer spaniel resided at his feet, ever ready for a timely handout. Mom's mission on that holiday was to keep Dad from feeding the dog bites of turkey. She was observant, but he was sneaky.

My mission was to steal a turkey wing before the large bird was served – like father, like son.

The feast

The bird was rubbed with olive oil, salted and stuffed. There was always an oyster stuffing and a second, more conventional offering made of apple and celery. Both sweet and mashed potatoes accompanied the turkey, as did Brussels sprouts, homemade gravy and fresh rolls. Cranberry sauce was a must.

The folks generally invited an elderly bachelor, Bub Baker, to the celebration. I clearly remember Baker, one of the early pioneers to the peninsula and a fine storyteller. While he told tall tales of bear encounters and catching thousands of king salmon in the Columbia River, my mother's attention was diverted from my father to the pioneer. At that point, Dad slipped a slice of

turkey to Sprig, our feisty liver and white springer spaniel. The children watched all this with rapt attention and smug smiles.

Dad carved the turkey like the surgeon he was. His hands lacerated the bird with unusual dexterity. We boys gobbled up all evidence of the repast with equal determination, often lining up for a third helping.

Two homemade pies with fluffy whipped cream followed the feast. One was always pumpkin, and pecan was the favored sidekick.

Delicious tradition

Nothing was prepackaged, and the meal was both plentiful and traditional.

Which brings me to the point: Thanksgiving dinner is generally traditional.

In these times of culinary egalitarianism,

one might offer a rib roast, studded with whole garlic cloves and rubbed with loads of crushed pepper, or a winter steelhead, stuffed and baked to perfection. Vegetables could include Japanese eggplant.

At our house, wild mushroom stuffing is mandatory, particularly if the mushrooms remain in season. Stuffing can make a meal in itself.

Certainly, the leftovers are a highlight to the rainy November days. Though white wine is appropriate with the big bird, I prefer an Oregon Pinot Noir, one light and lingering with strong legs and Willamette Valley terroir.

This is to say, whatever preference, make your meal memorable. Celebrate our good luck and full bellies. Happy Thanksgiving!



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WILD MUSHROOM STUFFING

By Laurie Anderson

Ingredients:

3 cups or dried whole wheat bread, diced in half-inch cubes and baked in the oven until golden, or simply dried

3 cups of sourdough white, prepared as above

1 Sweet onion, diced and sautéed

1 cup chopped fresh celery

2 tablespoons fresh garlic or sweet baked garlic in olive oil, sautéed with onion and celery

2-4 cups of wild mushrooms: chanterelles, *Lactarius Deliciosus* or Man on Horseback (*Tricholoma*) or anything edible we can find the season. Dried morels constitute heaven in a pan.

2 cups homemade chicken stock (if needed, add more until the mixture is soft and fluffy)

¼ cup chopped fresh sage

¼ cup chopped Italian parsley

4 eggs, beaten

2 tablespoons Yoshida's or oyster sauce

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons butter

Red chili flakes (optional)

Salt and pepper to taste



Laurie Anderson

A traditional American Thanksgiving dinner, plated up.

Directions:

Sauté onions and garlic until translucent in two tablespoons of olive oil and two of butter. Add celery and continue braising until soft. Add mushrooms and gently cook. Add croutons. Sauté another couple minutes, then transfer to a work bowl.

In another bowl, add stock, oyster sauce, herbs and the eggs. Stir the liquid ingredients together. Add salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle with some chili flakes, and stuff away.

Stuffing can fill a glass baking dish, which cuts down the baking time of a large turkey. I like to push whole sage leaves under the skin of the bird along with a couple of tablespoons of virgin olive oil. Bake the dressing until 155 degrees or until the turkey is finished. Do not overcook the bird or the dressing.