

Laura Calder's EASY THANKSGIVING FEAST

THE TV COOK AND AUTHOR SHARES HER BEST RECIPES
AND ENTERTAINING TIPS.

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My family will tell you I was born to host. As soon as I could sit up by myself, I was on the counter beside my mother's mixing bowls, taking it all in. Once I could write, I would interview neighbours, taking a notebook wherever we went and transcribing my investigations onto 1970s recipe cards (Linda's "slush" and Vida's "hole whit rolls" are still preserved in my wobbly seven-year-old scrawl).

Somehow the desire to feed people has never left me — even though our Toronto home is neither large nor lavish. Thanksgiving is a wonderful occasion to host. To me, it's a holiday perfectly suited to our times: a secular feast day that's open to everyone and based on gratitude. How modern! Unlike Christmas or Hanukkah, which tend to be family-oriented, Thanksgiving encourages stretching the table out to welcome anyone who's around.

If you're hosting, the traditional menu relieves some of the pressure because everyone knows what to expect. We get to march along in step with the tried and true, only throwing in a dash of originality if we want to.

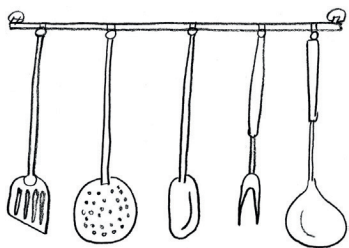
At our house, we always go around the table after dinner so everyone can share what they're grateful for. It's a good way to bring people together in the moment — and a reminder that even our most celebratory meals are always about so much more than the food.



Laura Calder in her
Toronto kitchen.

Menu

The Alfonso
Beet and Pecan
Endive Boats
Parsley, Sage, Rosemary
and Thyme-Brined
Roast Turkey
Anne Willan's
"Burnt" Beans
Celeriac Purée
Cranberry Sauce
Best Bread Stuffing
Triple Ginger Cookies
Quick Pumpkin



1 KEEP APPETIZERS LIGHT AND BRIGHT

Thanksgiving dinner is a journey, so one simple hors d'oeuvre, like these endive boats, is all you need. The creamy cheese and crunchy nuts create a bite with perfect texture.

2 EVERY HOME BAR NEEDS A COCKTAIL KIT

With these tools (and some liquor, of course), you can make just about any cocktail:

- Two shakers (one large and one small)
- A mixing glass
- Strainers
- A bar spoon and muddler
- A citrus press and Y-peeler for garnishes
- Two jiggers
- A corkscrew
- An ice bucket and tongs
- Paper straws

BEET AND PECAN ENDIVE BOATS | PG. 156



These also taste great with chopped pear instead of beets

Ceramic platters, Objekts
Tabletop Props; cocktail napkin, Linen Way.



In Laura's eclectic dining room, a vintage desk has been repurposed as a liquor cabinet.

THE ALFONSO | PG. 156



Pink glasses, silver sugar bowl, tongs, Cynthia Findlay Antiques;
cocktail napkins, Linen Way.

Laura drew all the illustrations for her new book, *The Inviting Life*

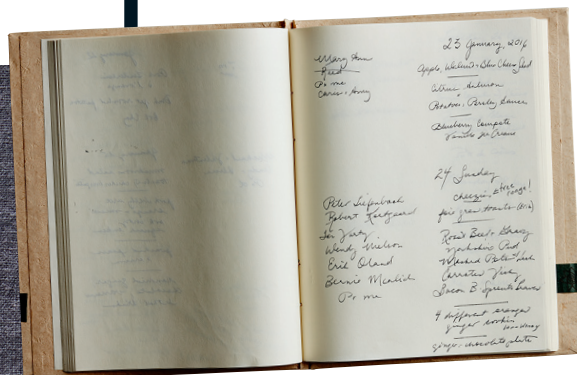
3 DON'T SKIP THE BRINE

We always make author Michael Ruhlman's rosemary brine for fried chicken, so for Thanksgiving I immediately thought: Why not add a few more herbs and adapt it for turkey? This brine adds wonderful flavour and makes the bird ultra moist.

PARSLEY, SAGE, ROSEMARY
AND THYME-BRINED ROAST
TURKEY | PG. 156

A COOK'S LIFE

Laura tells us about her prized culinary possessions.



This dinner party book is a record of every dinner we've ever hosted in our house. It includes all the menus and all the names of our guests.



A Parisian friend gave me this spice grinder, which she found at a flea market. It's fun to use for pepper, but it's mostly decorative.



Cast iron has a certain humility and honesty about it. These pans are great for potato rösti, fried eggs and toasting spices.



A good, sharp knife is a friend for life. It makes all the chopping a pleasure. I use a French chef's knife for a rocking motion chop and a Japanese-style knife (pictured) when julienning.

Platter, Cynthia Findlay Antiques; tablecloth, Linen Way.

Objekts Tabletop Props (board)

4 KEEP SIDES ON THE STOVETOP

Your oven will be busy roasting the bird for most of the day, so stovetop dishes are ideal. Celeriac purée is easy to make and reheats really well — better than mashed potatoes — so you can make it ahead. If the purée thickens too much, just loosen it up with a little of the cooking liquid.

Green bowl, pewter dish, Objekts Tabletop Props.



CELERIAC
PURÉE | PG. 158



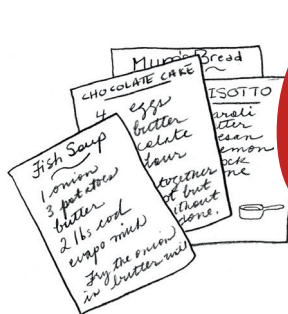
5 KEEP YOUR ESSENTIALS WITHIN REACH

Having the basics on hand is the key to stress-free cooking. Store salts and peppercorns by the stovetop and keep all your oils and vinegars nearby. I like to have things out where I can see them, and I think ingredient-packed open shelves add character to any kitchen.

ANNE WILLAN'S "BURNT" BEANS | PG. 158



Board, wooden spoons, Objekts Tabletop Props.



6 ALWAYS HAVE AT LEAST ONE NO-FUSS RECIPE

Are you prone to overcooking your vegetables? With this recipe, it's the whole point! The beans become more caramelized and succulent the longer you cook them.



Table, Sharon O'Dowd
Custom Furniture;
napkins, Linen Way.



RIGHT: This drawer of silverware is a collection that Laura has amassed over the years.

7 CREATE A WELCOMING TABLESCAPE

Arrange the table in a way that will foster the most fun. If I'm hosting eight or more guests, I make little illustrated placecards (below) to control the seating plan. I like it when people are close to the personalities that I think will amuse them the most.



BEST BREAD STUFFING | PG. 158

8 TALKING TURKEY

These tools will make your Thanksgiving dinner easier.

Strong tines make lifting your bird a breeze. **All-Clad Turkey forks**, \$35/pair. At Hudson's Bay.



Brining bags require less room than a large pot or bowl. **Fire & Flavor brining bag**, approx. \$14/pack of 3. Through Amazon.



This fat separator upgrades your gravy's flavour and texture. **OXO Good Grips 4-Cup fat separator**, \$27. At Bed Bath & Beyond.

9

DON'T SKIMP ON THE CRANBERRIES

Always have more cranberry sauce on hand than you think you'll need. The cooked version is richer and deeper in flavour, whereas the raw one has a tart and crisp taste.

THREE OF THE BEST CRANBERRY SAUCE



Raw

Coarsely chop 1 large navel orange (skin on) and whirl in food processor. Add 3 cups fresh cranberries and pulse until the cranberries are finely chopped but not puréed. Transfer to bowl and stir in 1 cup sugar. Chill for 30 minutes. Refrigerate until ready to use.



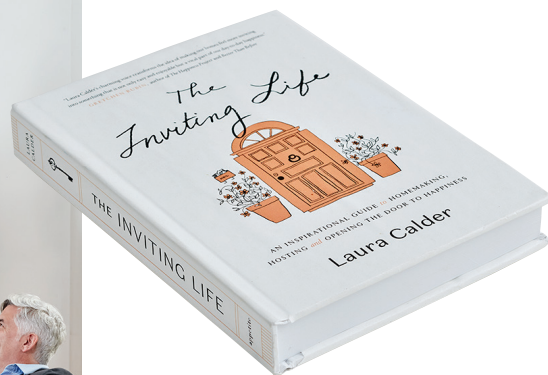
Cooked

Pick over and wash 3 cups fresh cranberries. Drain. Put in a pot with 1½ cups sugar and ½ cup water. Bring to a boil and cook until the skins pop, about ten minutes. Skim off any white froth. Cool. Refrigerate until ready to use.



Store-bought

There are lots of good jarred cranberries like these ones on the market. Catherine's **cranberry sauce**, \$7. Through Gourmet Trading.



LEFT: Laura Calder and her husband, writer and journalist Peter Scowen, relaxing in their living room.

ABOVE: Her new book, *The Inviting Life*, is a mix of memoir and advice, with tips on everything from spring cleaning to decorating for dinner parties. Appetite by Random House, 2017, HC 344 pages, \$30.



QUICK PUMPKIN ICE CREAM | PG. 160

TRIPLE GINGER COOKIES | PG. 160

Glasses, plate, cooling rack, Objekts Tabletop Props.

10

MAKE DESSERT FLEXIBLE AND FUN

Dessert is the final hurrah — and it's not to be taken too seriously. This is a great recipe because, if you're preparing it last minute, you can serve it as a fool instead of a frozen dessert. Just spoon into serving dishes and refrigerate until you're ready for the sweet stuff. If you do freeze it, line the loaf tin with plastic wrap first, and you'll have the option of serving it terrine-style, in slices.