

Thanksgiving Traditions

Another holiday, come and gone... seems like yesterday when I told my husband that I would be on board to put up the Christmas decorations early. Had we not done it then, they would be late now; how fast time flies. Our Thanksgiving holiday was great, as always, and in this glorious season, I'm making sure to take the time to truly appreciate our blessings, thank God for everything, and to savor the family traditions and memories we've been creating.

From the **delicious** spread on Thanksgiving Day (thank you to Hubby!) shared with great friends to the joyous 'Welcome Santa!' parade we enjoy annually in our small town the day after Thanksgiving (though a tad bit nippy at the parade this year, but fun as ever!); with Black Friday bargains (Hubby took a few kids Black Friday shopping early in the morning this year while I slept in – always fun!) and a long, lazy vacation with the kids while they enjoy a break from school, our Thanksgiving weekend was happy, prayerful, relaxing, and full of traditions that I hope will last for years to come.

Hope your Thanksgiving was happy, safe, wondrous, and that you were able to have some time to relax and reflect upon your blessings... may the rest of your 2010 holidays hold the same.

A day at the fair

Last Monday, I spend a good portion of the day at the Fulton County Fair. I will have to say that this is a very large county fair. It is also a real county fair, with all of the farm implements, crops and of course animals. There are food merchants galore, but I want to talk about just one of them.

[Let's talk about Bayou Billy](#). A wonderful little establishment that was set up on the grounds of the Fulton County Fair. Unfortunately, I did not see that little fair listed on the website's event list. Did they just miss it. Will that particular food wagon show up at other sites that may not be on the event list? I really need to know. I may become a food wagon groupie.

Yes, the food was that good. I know one other semi-tangenteer that would like this food too. C – it had some real spicy kick too it. Especially the habanero pepper that was placed on top of my sandwich (by request). I'm going to be looking for more places that they will show up and may make a road trip or two. Yep, it was that good.

I found out from the website that you can order some of their sauces on line. I may have to do that for a game night.

Oh the rest of the fair? I had fun as usual. Played a game or two, but didn't win anything. Shot a bow for the first time in many years. I think I need practice. A great day with family and friends.

I can't taste anything...

I've been under the weather the past few days with a cold that just wouldn't give up. My nose has finally stopped run 24 hours a day, and my throat is allowing me to talk with a normal voice again. No fever, no body ache, just headache, sore throat and a nose that wouldn't quit.

The worst part about all of this is that I lost my sense of taste. I realized with the stuffed nose, it would be cut down, but it is almost non-existent even today after my nose cleared

up.

Went to a Oriental buffet today with my daughter and everything was bland. All the chicken dishes tasted the same. The lo mien was ok, but I think I liked the texture of the noodles. I couldn't taste spice, salt or other flavors. I wasn't sure if this was the restaurant or not. They had sushi bar, so I had some of that. Every piece I had tasted just like the one before. The ginger had little zip. The wasabi just cleared my sinuses more, but it had no flavor. Then I realized it wasn't the restaurant. If ginger slices and wasabi have no flavor, it has to be outside of the food. It has to be me.

For someone who likes to figure out all of the different flavors that go into making food taste good, this is almost worse than the being sick part. I never lost my appetite, but the food since last Wednesday evening has not had any appeal. If this goes on much longer, I think I will have no problem losing weight. Why eat when everything is missing its flavor?

Here are some funny things that are happening with my taste buds:

Cola tastes like lemon-lime drinks tastes like slightly sweetened carbonated water.

Orange juice, cranberry juice, grape juice and sugar water all taste the same.

The only thing that made fish and chicken taste different was the texture.

Potato chips aren't as good if you can't taste the salt.

With no taste going on, mushrooms are nasty.

Noodles were ok, but I wasn't expecting a lot of flavor from them.

Tea tasted just like it should today, before today with no

sense of smell, I was drinking hot water.

If this lasts too much longer, I will have quite a list.

Yummy Healthy Snack

My husband and I have been enjoying this snack lately, and it's healthy and easy to make. You'll need:

Apples – Type is up to you – we think Granny Smith tastes best for this. I also tried it with Gala apples which are good, but I don't recommend softer varieties like Red Delicious.

Peanut Butter – We highly recommend natural peanut butter – Smucker's makes some. It's a little more expensive than the standard variety like Skippy or Jif, but it contains only peanuts and a little salt – none of that other junk like hydrogenated oils, sugar, and who-knows-what-else. The taste of real peanut butter is amazingly better than the junky kind too!

Grape Nuts Cereal

Basically, you just slice the apples, cover them with peanut butter (less if you're watching your fat intake), and sprinkle with Grape Nuts – it's really good! And it's great for a snack or light lunch for diabetics also because the protein in the peanut butter lowers blood sugar that might be elevated from the apples and cereal. If you decide to try it, let me know what you think in the comments section!

I have this and this, what can I make for dinner?

Yes, my daughters have asked this question, or “What can I do with?”

If you ask any of my daughters, you will find out that I experiment in the kitchen. I tend to think of cooking as science with food. I like to find out what flavors go well with others. I often find out what flavors don't go well with others. Not all of my kitchen experiments work. My daughters may tell you that too. But over the years, a few of these experiments became family favorites. Our family meatloaf recipe is one constant changing experiment. Many different flavors made many wonderful meals. Through all of this experimentation, my girls learned that they could trust me if I said I tried this and it tasted good.

Where is this leading? Well, I thought that if I can get my daughters to read and reply, I'll give a few recipes from various starting points. My goal will always be 1 or 2 pan/pot meals that take very little prep time. I dislike washing dishes, so the fewer I get dirty, the better I like it. Since I'm not sure my daughters will reply, I will open this up to everyone. What do you have in your refrigerator? What's for dinner?

Now that I have one...

Can I do anything else with a double-boiler?

The short answer was yes. You can cook anything that needs low

even heat. Most of the time this is chocolate for candies. You can also make many sauces and fondues. There are many recipes on the web just for double boiler cooking. In fact the double boiler was one way to reheat leftovers before the microwave. But can it be used to make a main dinner dish.

For that I needed to do a more in depth search. I've never used it for more than melting chocolate and making custards. Never a main course.

I did a lot of searching and found many sauces for main dishes. I also found that a double boiler was used to reheat the dish as a part of the dish. I even found a recipe for scrambled eggs. While I do like eggs for dinner every now and then, I didn't consider that a main course.

Then I found one. I've never had it before and will try it shortly. So let's try to make Welsh Rarebit. Yes, the double boiler is used to make the sauce, but since the sauce is the main ingredient in this dish, I think it fits my needs. The only thing that isn't cooked in the double boiler is the toast. There is even a variation that uses poached eggs with the sauce and toast. Those could be cooked in the lower portion of the boiler after the sauce is ready. Double use from a double boiler. I like that.

From that I could also make Eggs Benedict. Toasted English muffin, poached eggs and hollandaise sauce, but I have to cook the Canadian bacon.. Hmm not quite a full meal with a double boiler, but close.

Sandwich for Wednesday

Tomorrow I will be using some leftover beef roast to be the base of my dinner sandwich. I have more salad fixings so that works out too.

Thin sliced beef, beef broth, onions, peppers. Saute onions and peppers when tender add broth and beef heat through.

Drain, serve with tortillas, shredded cheese and salsa.

Salad or something else to go with this and I'm all set. Or I could use some of the rolls from today and serve it au jus, skipping the salsa. That of will depend on how I feel.

I will be making a trip to Fort Wayne Thursday and Friday, so I may not have homemade sandwiches for those days. It all depends on when I get home. Thursday night is also play rehearsal so that limits the amount of time I can spend in the kitchen. There are quicker things to put together, and of course the easy way out – hitting some fast food place.

I'm having fun putting together some quick 'meals' and sharing them, I hope you can try one or two on your own. I'm also open to any suggestions.

Sandwich for today...

I thought I could just add a comment about my sandwiches this week, but why waste a good blog post. ☐

I'm in the mood for something different today, so today's sandwich has no meat. I picked up some Portabella Mushrooms (the big ones), a sweet onion, tomatoes, and Munster cheese. For bread I picked up some hard rolls.

To start I sautéed the onion. I then put these off to the side while cooking the mushrooms. The mushroom was brushed on both sides with olive oil. I started cooking with the gill side down for a couple of minutes. I'm just heating through on this side. I then flip the mushroom, fill with onions and top with a slice of munster cheese. At this point I brush the roll with olive oil and brown the insides. When done, slid the mushroom between the two slices of the roll. Salt and or pepper can be added to the gill side of the mushroom before adding the onions.

A slice of tomato made a nice addition to the sandwich.

This goes very nicely with a spinach salad.

That started with some baby spinach, shredded carrots, diced onion, slivered almonds, thin sliced radishes and mandarin orange segments. I'm cooking for one today, so I don't have measurements for this. I just made enough for me. A ginger dressing completed the salad.

So what's for dinner?

Can't get football, so...

Now I want a sandwich. I'm watching a show about sandwiches.

Roast beef of all kinds and now a ground beef sandwich that isn't a burger. It looks like a sloppy joe without the sauce.

Just cooked ground beef. It looks good. It is just amazing the number of ways you can make beef sandwiches. On to Philly Beef Steaks and Hoagies.

I'm not sure how somebody got a job traveling around the country tasting various sandwiches. Can I have that job.

Ok, maybe not. Some of these sandwiches look just bad.

Now this got me thinking of my favorite sandwiches. I've written about my comfort foods before, so I may have to give a list of just sandwiches. I guess I'm thinking of things that you normally won't find in restaurants. I guess this week, I will try a few sandwiches and see what I like the best.

I'm not sure, but I think it moved...

Yes, I've heard that reaction to sushi on occasion. I think it came from my children. For the most part when they were growing up, and for some even now, they never wanted to try new food. From the limited diet of their childhood (not that limited, I did experiment in the kitchen), I have a couple that will try new foods, and one that even enjoys some different tastes. As far as I know none of them are as varied in their food trying as their dad. (I've eaten bugs on purpose and some were tasty)

So anyway I took my eldest daughter and her husband out to dinner this evening. The reason is this was her first week back at work after some time off. I just thought it would help not to have to cook dinner for one evening. Yes, we did go to a Sushi Bar/Japanese Restaurant. We went to the [Koto Buki](#) restaurant in Toledo.

If you like sushi, you should go. If you don't, but you like some oriental foods, you should go. In addition to the sushi and sashimi, they have other oriental dishes. It is rather pricey when you start ordering a lot of Sushi. If you want less expensive, I guess you could order from the sides and

appetizers. □

Anyway we all ended up eating all we wanted (and more) and had a good relaxing evening. As they say in the commercials, it was priceless.