



NEWSLETTER



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Thanksgiving Day in United States and in UK

THE fourth Thursday of November marks **Thanksgiving**.

Public life

Most government offices, businesses, schools and other organizations are closed on Thanksgiving Day. Many offices and businesses allow staff to have a four-day weekend so these offices and businesses are also closed on the **Friday after Thanksgiving Day**.

Thanksgiving Day it is one of the busiest periods for travel in the USA. This can cause congestion and overcrowding. Seasonal parades and busy football games can cause disruption to local traffic.

Background

Thanksgiving Day has been an annual holiday in the United States since 1863. Not everyone sees Thanksgiving Day as a cause for celebration. Each year since 1970, a group of Native Americans and their supporters have staged a protest for a National Day of Mourning at Plymouth Rock in Plymouth, Massachusetts on Thanksgiving Day. **American Indian Heritage Day** is also observed at this time of the year.

There are claims that the first Thanksgiving Day was held in the city of El Paso, Texas in 1598. Another early event was held in 1619 in the Virginia Colony. Many people trace the origins of the modern Thanksgiving Day to the harvest celebration that the Pilgrims held in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1621. However, their first true thanksgiving was in 1623, when they gave thanks for rain that ended a drought. These early thanksgivings took the form of a special church service, rather than a feast.

In the second half of the 1600s, thanksgivings after the harvest became more common and started to become annual events. However, it was celebrated on different days in different communities and in some places there were more than one thanksgiving each year. George Washington, the first president of the United States, proclaimed the first national Thanksgiving Day in 1789.

What do people do?

In the United States, certain kinds of food are traditionally served at Thanksgiving meals. Firstly, baked or roasted turkey is usually the featured item on any Thanksgiving feast table (so much so that



Thanksgiving is sometimes referred to as "Turkey Day"). Stuffing, mashed potatoes with gravy, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, sweet corn, various fall vegetables (mainly various kinds of squashes), and pumpkin pie are commonly associated with Thanksgiving dinner. All of these are actually native to the Americas or were introduced as a new food source to the Europeans when they arrived. Turkey may be an exception. In his book *Mayflower*, Nathaniel Philbrick suggests that the Pilgrims might already have been familiar with turkey in England,

even though the bird is native to the Americas. The Spaniards had brought domesticated turkeys back from Central America in the early 17th century, and the birds soon became popular fare all over Europe, including England, where turkey (as an alternative to the traditional goose) became a "fixture at English Christmases".

Yum ... Let us give thanks for pumpkin and pastry to make pie.



John F. Kennedy unofficially spares a turkey on November 19th, 1963. The practice of "pardoning" turkeys in this manner becomes a permanent tradition in 1989.



Thanksgiving en UK

Thanksgiving isn't a celebration in the UK - the nearest equivalent is Harvest Festival where we give our thanks for food and the years' harvest. With so many Americans living in the UK and the close alliance this country feels for its American cousins, Thanksgiving in the UK is certainly gaining momentum.



A surprising number of restaurants around the country serve a Thanksgiving dinner and there are a number of festivals taking place. If you prefer to stay at home and prepare dinner yourself, here are some recipes

and info to help you on your way to Thanksgiving in the UK.

Roast Turkey with a Sage and Onion Stuffing and Gravy

The mainstay of the Thanksgiving Dinner is roast turkey. This is a typical British recipe usually served at Christmas but works well for any dinner. This recipe may look complicated but is actually quite straight forward. If you are concerned about how long to cook your turkey use the handy choosing and roasting guide and don't forget the essential : Mashed Potatoes.

Thanksgiving Day is traditionally a day for families and friends to get together for a special meal. The meal often includes a turkey, stuffing, potatoes, cranberry sauce, gravy, pumpkin pie, and vegetables. Thanksgiving Day is a time for many people to give thanks for what they have.

Thanksgiving Day parades are held in some cities and towns on or around Thanksgiving Day. Some parades or festivities also mark the opening of the Christmas shopping season. Some people have a four-day weekend so it is a popular time for trips and to visit family and friends.

