



It's one of my favorite things to be thankful for. I don't have to cook Thanksgiving dinner. Vince and I are blessed to be invited to a gathering of friends every year. All we have to do is show up with a side dish. In true southern fashion, the turkeys are deep-fried and everyone takes copious amounts of vegetables, salads, side dishes and desserts. In keeping with the spirit of not being responsible for the main course, I'm sharing a couple of delicious Thanksgiving side dish recipes and a seasonal cocktail. In spite of the experience of a very trying year, we have so much to be grateful for. Celebrate every occasion. Happy Thanksgiving!

(Editor's note: [Watch Debbi in action here!](#))

Thanksgiving Salad

This yummy and hearty salad can be prepared for 2 people or for 100 people. Increase or decrease the ingredient amounts to accommodate your Thanksgiving table.

For the vinaigrette:

¼ cup red-wine vinegar

1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

1 teaspoon sugar

Salt and black pepper, to taste

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Whisk the vinegar, mustard, sugar, salt and pepper together in a small bowl. Whisking

constantly, add the oil in a slow, steady stream and continue whisking until thickened. Set aside until ready to use.

For the salad:

Kale

Arugula

Croutons

Blueberries

Bacon, cooked and crumbled

Blue cheese crumbles

Grape tomatoes, diced

Dried cranberries

Walnuts

Place salad greens on a large serving platter. Top with croutons, blueberries, bacon, blue cheese crumbles, grape tomatoes, dried cranberries and walnuts. Drizzle with vinaigrette before serving.

Praline Pumpkin Imperial



This recipe can easily be halved just like the one in the photo. You'll only need ½ of the cake mix. Save the remaining mix for other uses.

2 (15-ounce) cans pumpkin

1½ cups sugar

4 eggs, lightly beaten

3 cups evaporated milk

½ teaspoon ground cloves

½ teaspoon ground ginger

½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

½ teaspoon salt

1 (15.25-ounce) box yellow cake mix

2 sticks butter, melted

2 cups chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Lightly grease a 9x13-inch glass baking dish. In a large bowl, combine pumpkin, sugar, eggs, evaporated milk and spices. Pour mixture into prepared baking dish. Sprinkle top evenly with dry cake mix. Drizzle melted butter evenly over cake mix. Sprinkle chopped pecans on top. Bake for 75 to 85 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of dessert comes out clean. Cool on wire rack for 30 minutes. Refrigerate before serving. Serves 12 to 15.

Red Appletini



Omit the cranberry juice and grenadine to make a Green Appletini. Garnish with a slice of green apple.

1 ounce vodka

1 ounce sour apple liqueur

½ ounce cranberry juice

½ ounce grenadine

Pour ingredients into a martini shaker filled with ice. Cover tightly and shake for 15 seconds. Serve in a martini glass garnished with a slice of red apple. Serves 1.



The writer owns Catering by Debbi Covington and is the author of three cookbooks, Celebrate Beaufort, Celebrate Everything! and Dining Under the Carolina Moon. Debbi's website address is www.cateringbydebbicovington.com. She may be reached at 843-525-0350 or by email at dbc@cateringbydebbicovington.com.