

# Beyond Turkey: The Migration of Thanksgiving Tradition

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*[Photograph: J. Kenji Lopez-Alt]*

No two Thanksgiving traditions are entirely alike. But just how unique do they get? Thanksgiving is, if anything, an immigrant's holiday; a story of the bridging of new world and old. So it's fitting that, like people, Thanksgiving traditions themselves continue to migrate and evolve.

We spoke to first- and second-generation immigrants in the food industry about how the cuisines of their ancestral homes have influenced the Thanksgiving meals they make here in the US. Here's what they had to say.



*Salvatore Rizzo, owner and director of De Gustibus Cooking School.*

"For Thanksgiving, we weave in our favorite Italian flavors and dishes at every turn. We always start with a wonderful antipasto platter with bottles of chilled Prosecco on the table, along with some artisan breads from the local panetteria (everyone has their favorite one in the city). I have a big Italian family, so we divide up the dishes. I always love to make the first course—usually an authentic pasta that really speaks to fall—like a rigatoni with roasted butternut squash, sweet and spicy sausage, sage, and a sprinkling of Pecorino Romano.

Aside from the pasta course, I always prepare some side dishes. This year, it will be broccoli rabe with a calabrian chili-spiked oil, roasted Brussels sprouts with pancetta and a splash of red wine vinegar, mashed potatoes with basil and Pecorino, and roasted cauliflower with olives, capers and raisins. For wines this year, including the Prosecco, we are serving a delicious Soave with the pasta, and a 2005 Barrua from Sardegna which I saved for what I think is one of the most special holidays! For dessert, we have traditional American dishes like pumpkin pie, but this course is not complete without *sfinigi*, deep-fried sweet ricotta fritters.

And, as with all holidays when you're Italian, it would not be complete without having at least 35+ guests, since both of my brother-in-laws' families attend, along with my in-laws, nieces, nephews, and friends." —Salvatore Rizzo, *De Gustibus Cooking School*