**Tucker Paleo Inspired Thanksgiving 2012**

**Brined and Herb Roasted Turkey**

* For the brine:
	+ 1 18-20 quart food safe plastic container
	+ 1 cup kosher salt
	+ 3 cups brown sugar
	+ 1/8 cup black peppercorns
	+ 1/8 cup coriander seeds
	+ 1/8 cup cumin seeds
	+ 1/8 cup fennel seeds
	+ Parsley stalks
	+ carrots
	+ celery
	+ onion
	+ 4 cups boiling water
	+ 1 cup lemon juice
	+ 4 cups very cold water
	+ one 12-18 pound turkey (young, fresh, pastured, organic turkeys are best)
	+ Food injector
* Directions:
	1. Place first 9 ingredients into a heat proof bowl
	2. Pour boiling water over the 9 ingredients and let “marinate” and cool.
	3. Once cooled, pour into container for brining
	4. Add the lemon juice and the cold water.
	5. Stir to mix.
	6. Submerge Turkey into brine.
	7. Using the food injector, suck up the brine and inject into the turkey breasts in multiple places, same with the turkey thighs.
	8. Let brine in refrigerator for at least 24 hours, better if 48.
	9. Re-inject brine into breasts and thighs ever 12 hours (more if only brining for 24 hours).
* For Roasting:
	+ 1 stick of butter softened
	+ Mixture of fresh herbs (sage, parsley, rosemary, thyme, marjoram are good). You want about a cup of this mixture (more if you really like herbs as I do). Herbs should be chopped.
	+ Salt and paper to taste
	+ 1 onion, quartered
	+ 1 lemon, quartered
	+ 2 carrots, chopped into 2 inch pieces
	+ 2 celery stalks, chopped into 2 inch pieces
* Directions:
1. Preheat oven or roaster to 350 degrees.
2. Remove turkey from brine and discard brine.
3. Pat turkey dry with paper towels.
4. Stuff the onion, lemon, carrots and celery into the turkey’s cavity.
5. Mix herbs into the butter.
6. Spread herb butter mixture over the turkey generously. Rub some under the skin where you can (breasts especially).
7. Sprinkle salt and pepper over entire bird.
8. Place in preheated oven or roaster.
9. Cook until internal temp is 155-160 degrees. This will likely take around 3 hours, could take more. DO NOT OPEN OVEN OR ROASTER AT ANYTIME!!! Purchase an external thermometer for best results.
10. Take turkey out and tent with foil.
11. Let turkey rest for 20-30 minutes before carving and serving.

**Caulisnip Mashed Roasted Garlic and Chevre Potatoes**

* One head of cauliflower (or one package frozen), cut into flowerets
* 5 Parsnips, peeled and cut into 1 inch pieces
* 1 large russet potato, baked until tender
* ½ head of roasted garlic (roast with olive oil and salt and pepper)
* 1 container of creamy, spreadable goat cheese
* 4 TBSP of butter
* Liquid of choice to help “smooth” out (i.e., cream, chicken stock, whole milk, goat milk), may not need at all, may need a lot, will depend on how you like your taters.
* Salt and pepper to taste
* Directions:
1. Bake potato and roast garlic. Done at 400 degrees.
2. Boil cauliflower and parsnips until tender.
3. Place boiled cauliflower and parsnips into a food processor and pulse until incorporated, but not smooth.
4. Add garlic and the inside of the potato along with goat cheese and butter.
5. Process all until at a consistency you like. Add liquid as needed.
6. Season to taste.
7. I put in a Crockpot on low to keep warm.

**Pear, Fennel and Pomegranate Salad**

* 4 ripe (but not over ripe) pears of your choosing (I like the red ones), sliced into ¼ inch semi circles (you can use apples here too—I am just allergic)
* 1 fennel bulb, sliced into ¼ inch semi circles
* 1 pomegranate
* 1 cup candied pecans
* 2 T grapeseed oil (or other light oil)
* 1 T champagne vinegar
* Salt and pepper to taste
* Directions:
1. After slicing the pear and fennel, place into a large bowl.
2. Remove seeds from Pomegranate and pick out bits of the inedible flesh that may have also come out.
3. Add picked over seeds to pear and fennel.
4. In small bowl, whisk oil and vinegar, pour over pears, fennel and pomegranate.
5. Toss to coat.
6. Season to taste.
7. Serve salad in individual bowls. Right before serving, place a small handful of candied pecan halves into each bowl. Do not do this too early or the pecans will take on too much of the vinaigrette.

**Low Carb Sausage Stuffing**

* 1 loaf of low carb bread of your choice
* 6 stalks of celery, sliced thin
* 2 onions, minced
* 1 ½ lbs breakfast pork sausage
* ½ cup chopped fresh flat leaf parsley
* ¼ cup chopped fresh sage
* ¼ cup chopped fresh thyme
* 1 egg
* 4 cups chicken broth (less or more as needed)
* 1 stick butter
* Salt and pepper to taste
* Directions:
	+ Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
	+ Cut bread into 1 inch cubes. 2 pieces per person for serving (but if you want leftovers, double that).
	+ Lightly toast the bread cubes. Do not burn.
	+ Brown the sausage and transfer to a bowl or plate using a slotted spoon.
	+ In the sausage oil, sauté the onion and celery until soft. Add more oil if needed (use olive oil).
	+ Place bread cubes in a large bowl and mix in sausage, herbs and onion and celery mixture.
	+ Add about a cup of chicken broth and mix thoroughly.
	+ Beat egg and add ½ cup chicken broth to the beaten egg. Mix this into the bread mixture thoroughly.
	+ Salt and pepper as you go, add a little each time you add some broth to help get it properly seasoned.
	+ Continue to add chicken broth as needed. You do not want the mixture to be too wet, but you also do not want it to be too dry. Make sure all bread is slightly moistened and the whole mixture is sticking together somewhat. I mix it all with clean hands.
	+ Butter a large casserole dish (I use a lasagna pan) and pour stuffing into it.
	+ Place knobs of butter across the top of the stuffing evenly.
	+ Bake for 45-60 minutes, checking for doneness at 45 minutes. If the breading is still pretty wet, it is not done. You want the top layer to be browned and somewhat crusty. If you lift up a bit of the top layer, you want to see a steamy and slightly spongy mixture, but not too dry or too wet.
	+ You can choose to mix everything at about 30-40 minutes, bringing the bottom layer to the top and thus more evenly distributing the “wet” so that it will dry out enough. Then, cook for another 20-30 minutes after mixing.

**Balsamic Green Beans and Mushrooms**

* 8 oz. baby bella mushrooms, sliced in 1/2 inch slices
* 1 lb. fresh green beans, preferably thin French style beans
* 2 T olive oil
* 1 T balsamic vinegar
* ½ T minced garlic
* salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
* 2 T finely grated parmesan cheese
* ½ cup cooked pancetta
* Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 400F.
2. Wash mushrooms and let drain.
3. While mushrooms are drying, trim ends of beans and cut beans in half so you have bite-sized pieces.
4. Cut mushrooms into slices 1/2 inch thick.
5. Put cut beans and mushrooms into a Ziploc bag or plastic bowl.
6. Whisk together olive oil, garlic and balsamic vinegar and pour over, then squeeze bag or stir so all the beans and mushrooms are lightly coated with the mixture.
7. Arrange on large cookie sheet, spreading them out well so beans and mushrooms are not crowded.
8. Roast 20 minutes. They may not be done, but we will finish at my house. We don’t want them over done.
* Wait to do these final stages at my house (we will reheat):
1. Season beans to taste with salt and fresh ground pepper.
2. Sprinkle with finely grated Parmesan and bacon.
3. Serve immediately

**Butternut Squash**

* 2 T minced fresh parsley
* 2 T minced fresh sage
* 2 tablespoons olive oil
* 2 garlic cloves, minced
* 1 teaspoon salt
* 1/2 teaspoon pepper
* 3 1/2 pounds butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
* 2 T butter
* 1/4-1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
* Directions:
1. In a large bowl, combine the parsley, sage, oil, garlic, salt and pepper.
2. Add squash and toss to coat.
3. Transfer to an ungreased shallow 2-qt. baking dish.
4. Place knobs of butter around the top of squash.
5. Bake, uncovered, at 400 degrees F for 45 minutes (may not be totally done, we will finish off at my house).
* We will do this at my house after we reheat:
1. After done baking, sprinkle Parmesan over top and serve.

**Gravy**

* Drippings from the turkey (separate fat)
* flour
* Turkey or chicken broth
* Salt and pepper to taste
* Directions:
	+ Once fat has been separated from the turkey drippings, pour fat into a separate sauce pan.
	+ Add an equal amount of flour and make a roux (if there was ½ cup of fat, then add ½ cup of flour). Cook until golden brown.
	+ Add up to one cup of the other (defatted) turkey drippings and bring to a boil.
	+ Add the rest of the turkey drippings (if there are more) and stir until combined, simmer for 5 minutes.
	+ Thin out with broth until it reaches a consistency you want, simmer for another 5 minutes.
	+ Salt and pepper to taste
	+ If the gravy is too thin after step 3 and 4, then you will want to take one table spoon of cornstarch and mix vigorously with broth, add that to the mixture and bring to a boil. If you end up having to do this, I suggest also adding a gravy browning and taste agent of some kind.

**Chocolate Peanut Butter Cream Pie**

* For the peanut butter cream filling:
	+ 1 cup creamy peanut butter (I use Jiff)
	+ 4 oz cream cheese, softened
	+ 1 stick butter, softened
	+ 1 cup powdered sugar, sifted
	+ 2 cups whipped cream
* Directions:
	1. Whip a quart of whipping cream until it resembles a “cool whip” type consistency. It will be used both here and for the mousse below. Set in refrigerator until needed.
	2. Mix the peanut butter, cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add powdered sugar until it tastes sweet enough for you (I do not usually use the whole cup called for).
	3. Fold in the 2 cups of whipped cream
	4. Set this filling into refrigerator to set until assembly.
* For the chocolate mousse:
* 4 oz milk chocolate
* 4 oz dark chocolate (at least 70%)
* 1 tsp vanilla
* 3 egg whites, beaten until stiff
* 3 egg yolks
* 3TBSP fine sugar (beaten with egg whites)
* 2 cups whipped cream
* Directions:
	1. Beat egg whites and sugar until stiff peaks form, set aside.
	2. In a double boiler, melt the chocolates, add in the vanilla and mix until smooth.
	3. Beat the egg yolks in a small bowl
	4. Take chocolate off heat and allow the chocolate to cool for a little bit, but not completely.
	5. Slowly add chocolate mixture to egg yolks a little at a time to temper the yolks. Stir constantly.
	6. Allow to cool a bit longer.
	7. Gently fold the chocolate and yolk mixture into the beaten egg whites.
	8. Gently fold the whipped cream into the chocolate mixture until it is a “mousse” consistency. You may not need the full 2 cups.
	9. Allow the mousse to set in the refrigerator for 30 minutes or more.
* For the chocolate ganache:
	+ 4 oz semi sweet chocolate
	+ 1 TBSP chocolate liquor (such as Godiva)
	+ 1 TBSP coconut oil
	+ 1TBSP heavy cream
* Directions:
	1. Melt the chocolate, liquor and coconut oil in a double boiler
	2. Once melted, take off heat.
	3. Mix in the heavy cream until smooth.
* For assembly:
	+ 2 chocolate crumb pie crusts (I just purchase the Oreo brand). If you do not want to serve in the aluminum pie plate, you will need to make your own with cookie crumbs and butter and a little sugar.
	+ 8 Reese’s peanut butter cups for decoration.
* Directions:
	+ In the crust, first layer the peanut butter cream filling.
	+ Then, pour a thin layer of ganache over the filling and refrigerate until the ganache has hardened somewhat (it will not get hard, hard, but will firm up).
	+ Pour a layer of the chocolate mousse over the layer of ganache.
	+ Drizzle another layer of ganache over the chocolate mousse. Do not cover completely, make it a drizzled look.
	+ Decorate the top of the pies with Reese’s cups. I put one whole one in the middle and then cut the others in half and stand them op in a circle around the whole one.

**Pumpkin Pie**

\*My mother is bringing this and I am not sure what recipe she uses.

**SoCo Spiced Whipped Cream**

* 1 pint whipping cream
* 1 TBSP Southern Comfort Whisky
* ½ tsp cinnamon
* 1 TBSP confectioner’s sugar
* Directions:
1. Mix all ingredients with a mixer on high speed until it has reached a whipped cream consistency.
2. Be careful not to over whip.