

# Janet's Notebook

By Janet Tharpe



## Feast on These Fabulous Christmas Dinner Recipes

Christmas dinner may be one of my favorite meals to cook—and eat! I love setting the table just right, looking at (and thankful for) our abundance of food, being surrounded by my family, with the glow of the Christmas tree in the background. It puts a smile on my face just thinking about it. And, of course, I've looked to you amazing home cooks for some recipe ideas.

Glazed ham is the center of my meal. This year, I'll be making Dori Rominger's Glazed Ham Recipe. It tastes good and looks good... the perfect combination! Brown sugar, syrup and mustard bake into the ham adding fantastic flavor. Turning the glaze into a sauce, tops off your sliced ham wonderfully. It's a terrific recipe for the holidays because it's easy to prepare. My guests (and side dishes) won't feel neglected.

Sweet potatoes are a staple at my Christmas table. Typically I candy them, but with so many sweets I was looking to try something different. That's why Carol White's Spicy Roasted Sweet Potatoes are perfect. "Candied sweet potatoes is another family recipe that I needed to make healthier," shares Carol. "I took away the sugar and butter that made up a heavy syrup. Instead I added agave nectar and olive oil in its place." Your guests will fall in love with the sweet and savory taste in every bite of these yummy potatoes.

"This was my mother's best recipe and we love it beyond description," reminisces JoEllen Fortenberry Ford. "[These Grandma Lee's Party Rolls are] soft, tender, high and luscious. It is worth the overnight rise, as it must rise slowly to be so light." There's only one thing difficult about this recipe... being patient enough to let them rise! It's no wonder there's a party every time these rolls make an appearance—they are scrumptious. And, if you happy to have any leftover, put a little mustard and a slice or two of ham on them. You'll have one tasty late night snack!

I have a sweet tooth, so dessert is almost as important as the ham. I love

pumpkin pie, but after eating it for Thanksgiving I tend to be a little tired of it. That's why I love Jessica Silva's Sweet Potato Marshmallow Swirl Cheesecake. It has the best qualities of cheesecake AND pumpkin pie. It's a terrific way to spice things up during the holiday season. And I love the easy gingersnap crust. Delish!

Molly W.'s Chocolate Armagnac Pecan Tart will also be making an appearance on my table. Armagnac is a French brandy and adds wonderful (not overpowering) flavor to this pecan tart. The combination of butter



*Chocolate Armagnac Pecan Tart*

and shortening makes a nice and flaky crust. A slice of this, with a nice cup of coffee, will be a wonderful end to the meal.

After we've completed our feast, there's nothing better than sitting around the fireplace and relaxing. This year, I'll be doing it with a glass of Rebecca Figueroa's Coquito (Puerto Rican Coconut Egnog). "This is a very typical, traditional Puerto Rican drink served during the holidays," explains Rebecca. The cream of coconut adds a lovely sweetness to the drink. If you don't want to use the rum, add rum extract instead as Rebecca suggests. I've tried this recipe with and without the alcohol and loved it both ways!

Whether you decide to try one of these tasty recipes or make your traditional family favorites, I know your meal will be wonderful. All of us at Just A Pinch hope your holiday is happy, healthy and filled with food!

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