



Celebrating a More Earth-Friendly Thanksgiving

12 Thanksgiving Tips

Because of the simplicity of Thanksgiving, it's probably one of the easiest holidays to "green" up. Here are a few tips to keep your conscious clean with a Green Thanksgiving, and keep you focused on the joy of the day:

- 1. Opt for an organic, local and free-range meal.**
Locally grown pumpkins, organic cranberry sauce, homemade stuffing...Mmmm. Heritage turkeys are also a great, sustainable way to go although some require ordering in advance. Try LocalHarvest.org for options and use their zip code finder to find the most local Tom available.
- 2. Choose an alternative invitation.**
If sending out invitations, do so through email when possible with services like Evite.com.
- 3. Opt for reusable decorations.**
Or try decorations made from food or natural materials that can be composted afterwards.
- 4. Shoot for leaving as little trash as possible.**
Cloth napkins, the good china, etc. Pool these resources from several households for large gatherings.
- 5. Setup up your recycling bins near your trash can to encourage recycling.**
You may need to check periodically that things are going in the right bins.
- 6. Do not buy individual drinks, such as bottled water or canned beverages.**
Homebrew tea, or purchase beverages in bulk packaging, such as gallon jugs. Set up beverages in attractive pitchers next to an ice bucket to add to the charm.
- 7. Organize transportation.**
Suggest carpooling to and from dinner or bus routes for urban commuters.
- 8. Compost when possible.**
Non-edible table scraps, pumpkin rinds, potato peelings, corn husks, etc can all go in the compost pile instead of the trash can.
- 9. Before and after cleaning/cleanup?**
Use only non-toxic and earth-friendly products to clean up after family and friends have left.
- 10. Combine the laundry.**
Save those cloth napkins and tablecloths (mentioned above) to add to a regular load, avoiding additional machine washes.
- 11. Donate your time with a local shelter feeding the homeless.**
It may just impact your life in such a way that this becomes a regular practice for you and your family.
- 12. Enjoy the time, connection and love between family and friends.**
Take turns sharing what you're thankful for, enjoy each other, make music or just talk and laugh. *These ARE the good ol' days and enjoying them is the most important thing we can sustain.*

Other Thanksgiving Ideas

1. Plant a tree:

It may seem very trivial at first, but it is one of the best things you can do to help nature. If you don't have your own garden, organize a tree planting festival at a public garden taking the required permissions, or at an interested friend's garden. Trees absorb carbon dioxide, about 26 pounds a year, and gives enough oxygen a family of four may need in an year to survive.

2. Shop for locally grown items

Try and shop for food items that are packed within 100 miles of your place of consumption. This will ensure lesser traveling of the ingredients, and hence less carbon print.

3. Go Organic

Organic is the way to grow. Shop for organic food (the package should announce it), or organically fed turkeys, or both. They are a tad expensive, but you are making a big difference and are also buying healthier food.

4. Celebrate at home

This will ensure less traveling and hence less pollution. Also invite your neighbors for a joint celebration and multiply the good effect.

5. Cook as per requirement

Remember what happened last year. You had a host of leftovers. Use that experience, and cook judicious amounts, so that there is lesser wastage. Do not store the leftovers; instead feed them to people and animals who needs them. You will have the double benefit: the pleasure of feeding the hungry and not using the refrigerator and saving on electricity consumption.

6. Vegetarian Thanksgiving:

If you can withstand the lure of roasted turkey, then this is a very good option, for your health, for nature, and as an act of compassion for the turkeys who suffer in factory farms.

7. Carbon credits

If you are flying to reach home for thanksgiving, then do your bit by buying carbon credits.

8. Reuse, Recycle

Recycle as if there is no tomorrow, and reuse as much as possible. Use paper napkins that can be washed and reused, for example.

9. Say thanks, and say your prayers

Cultivate your spiritual side and say your prayers. Say Thanks!

Psalm 136:26

"O give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever."

IN GRATITUDE

Thank you, Father/Mother God, for having created us and given us to each other in the human family. Thank you for being with us in all our joys and sorrows, for your comfort in our sadness, your companionship in our loneliness. Thank you for yesterday, today, tomorrow and for the whole of our lives. Thank you for friends, for health and for grace. May we live this and every day conscious of all that has been given to us.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

O God, we thank you for this earth, our home;
For the wide sky and the blessed sun,
For the salt sea and the running water,
For the everlasting hills
And the never-resting winds,
For trees and the common grass underfoot.
We thank you for our senses
By which we hear the songs of birds,
And see the splendor of the summer fields,
And taste of the autumn fruits,
And rejoice in the feel of the snow,
And smell the breath of the spring.
Grant us a heart wide open to all this beauty;
And save our souls from being so blind
That we pass unseeing

When even the common thornbush
Is aflame with your glory,
O God our creator,
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Christian Prayer FOR APPRECIATION OF EACH OTHER

We thank you, God, for the gift of Jesus your Son who came to our earth and lived in a simple home. We have a greater appreciation of the value and dignity of the human family because he loved and was loved within its shelter. Bless us this day; may we grow in love for each other in our family and so give thanks to you who are the maker of all human families and our abiding peace.

PRAYER AT HARVEST AND THANKSGIVING

O God, source and giver of all things,
You manifest your infinite majesty, power and goodness
In the earth about us:
We give you honor and glory.
For the sun and the rain,
For the manifold fruits of our fields:
For the increase of our herds and flocks,
We thank you.
For the enrichment of our souls with divine grace,
We are grateful.

(If Christian, add this part)

Supreme Lord of the harvest,
Graciously accept us and the fruits of our toil,
In union with Jesus, your Son,
For the growth of your Church,
For peace and love in our homes,
And for salvation for all.
We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

<http://www.godweb.org/thanksgivingprayers.htm>

<http://www.sustainablebabysteps.com/green-thanksgiving.html>

<http://www.theholidayspot.com/thanksgiving/go-green.htm>