



LIVE! FROM AMERICA: A TASTE OF THANKSGIVING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2012

TRANSCRIPT

Ambassador Marshall: Hello, my name is Capricia Penavic Marshall. I'm the Chief of Protocol for the United States. And welcome to the Blair House, the President's guest house. Please come in and join me. We are so thrilled that you're joining us for "Live! From America: A Taste of Thanksgiving". Our tradition of a Thanksgiving meal is deeply woven into our culture. In just a few moments, you'll have the chance to meet two members of the American Chef Corps as they prepare a few classic Thanksgiving dishes. But first, I want to welcome you to the Blair House, the official guest house of the President of the United States of America. Since 1942, Blair House staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that visits are gracious, comfortable, and convey the honor to which any head of state is entitled. There are many items here of historic and cultural significance.

At the main entrance, we are greeted by the portrait of the Marquis de Lafayette. Almost every president of the United States has crossed this very threshold. Here we are in the Lincoln sitting room, which has the last portrait that President Abraham Lincoln sat for before his assassination in 1865. Blair House plays a unique role in American diplomacy, and we're happy to have you here with us. So welcome and we hope you enjoy "Live! From America: A Taste of Thanksgiving".

Chef Sam Kass: Thank you, Ambassador Marshall. I am Sam Kass, and I'm thrilled to be here in this historic home right across the street from the kitchen I work in every day as Assistant Chef at the White House. We are here to celebrate one of the most beloved national holidays, Thanksgiving, with viewers around the world, including groups in Russia, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan and many more. Welcome to all of our viewers.

Every November, Americans, here in the United States and abroad, welcome family and friends into their homes, to gather in kitchens around dining room tables, cooking recipes and eating foods that have been passed down in families from generation to generation. We gather to express gratitude for our families and for all of the good things in life. And I must say it is one of my absolute favorite holidays. It is one that is only about family and great food, so what can be better than that. The American Thanksgiving holiday traces its origins to harvest festivals. It was customary to express thanks for a bountiful harvest in the cultures of both the first English settlers -- called the Pilgrims, who sailed to America from England in 1620 -- and the Native Americans whom they encountered and were already living in North America.

Many Thanksgiving traditions remind us of just how blessed we are to have good food that lasts us the year. The foods that are eaten today were also served at those first feasts: roast turkey, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes, among others. But as the U.S. population has become more diverse, so has the



Thanksgiving meal. Today, next to the Thanksgiving turkey might be a dish of tamales, of tabouli salad, couscous or sauerkraut. This morning, I'll be joined by three all-American chefs: Art Smith, Cris Comerford and Richard Hetzler, who have been kind enough to share their Thanksgiving recipes and traditions with us, and to demonstrate how to cook some signature dishes, so that you, at home, can cook your own Thanksgiving feast, and help us celebrate the holiday.

Chef Art Smith is the Executive Chef and Co-Owner of Table Fifty-Two, Art and Soul, Southern Art, and LYFE kitchen restaurants. He has received the culinary profession's highest awards and has cooked for some of the world's most famous celebrities. In 1997, Smith became the personal chef for Oprah Winfrey, an American talk show host and television icon, a position that he held for ten years. Most recently, Art has made several appearances on major American television shows, including Top Chef. He is also the author of three award-winning cookbooks: *Back to the Table*; *Kitchen Life: Real Food for Real Families*; and *Back to the Family*. In 2003, Art founded Common Threads, a non-profit organization that teaches children about diversity and tolerance.

Art is joined today in the kitchen by Cris Comerford, Executive Chef of the White House. Cris is responsible for planning and preparing all the meals for the First Family that they enjoy with their friends and their family, and for official state dinners. Cris is one of the greatest chefs in America, and she is one of the most phenomenal people that I know. So let's now turn to Art and Cris in the kitchen and learn about American staples in traditional Thanksgiving feasts: roast turkey and gravy, cornbread stuffing, and cranberry pear chutney. Art and Cris, thank you for joining us today.

Chef Art Smith: Hey, Sam. Happy Thanksgiving. How are you?

Kass: Happy Thanksgiving. I'm so great, and I'm so excited to be with you guys. Please share with our viewers the secret for preparing these turkeys and roast gravy for all their friends and family.

Smith: Well I think, Sam, for all of us and, I know Cris agrees, Thanksgiving is one of those wonderful family holidays. I think the only problem is we refer to it as family but only usually one person makes it and the whole family should be cooking it, right. [Laughter.]

Chef Cris Comerford: It's really one of my favorite holidays because it's really just family-driven and food-driven.

Smith: Most definitely, and everything has a story, and we always equate the recipes that were made by our grandmothers, our aunts, or whomever. One of the, just the, symbolic parts of all Thanksgiving meals is the turkey. We have this beautiful, beautiful heritage turkey. It's a Bourbon Red. These are wonderful turkeys that are now being raised humanely in the United States. For many of you, you may not have turkey. You know, I remember, you know, my best Thanksgiving story: I was in South Africa outside of Johannesburg, and we were opening the school in South Africa for Ms. Winfrey, and we had to order turkeys from Brazil. Exactly, they flew over, they flew over. Come over here. Come over here.



So anyway, we had this amazing Thanksgiving. Ms. Winfrey wanted to create that American Thanksgiving, so we did. But you know turkeys. You know, and like we were just saying turkeys or chicken?

Comerford: Yes, chicken. Even like some Middle Eastern countries, like in Central Asia, lamb leg is really very wholesome. Anything you could roast whole and have the family gather round, that would be the best thing.

Smith: Exactly. Because I think it's that whole symbolic-ness that...and when it comes to the table and also too all these great things that we are going create to go with it would work with any of that.

Comerford: Yes, with any of that as well.

Smith: So what we did is we got our turkey. What I like to do. It's just really simple. Some people brine your turkeys. If you have concerns about sodium you may not want to do that. We just start with a turkey. And I love using sea salt, don't you? Sea salt, kosher salt. We just sprinkle a little bit of that on there. You know I think probably the most important thing when doing a turkey is your oven has to be hot enough.

Comerford: It has to be hot enough because you want it nice and brown and crispy outside and then turning it down later on to just get the moisture working.

Smith: Exactly. How many turkeys do you roast at thanksgiving? Ok, let's hear it.

Comerford: A lot. I don't want to give you numbers, but we do entertain quite a few people at the White House.

Smith: Chef Wes was saying when we do Thanksgiving at Art and Soul in Washington, I think he says he does 70 or 80 turkeys -- that is a lot of turkeys. Keep in mind, too, that with any kind of big roasted, whether it is lamb or chicken you want to make sure that you have these wonderful aromatic vegetables. We've got these beautiful rainbow carrots that have so much flavor and they add that. It's just the aroma. And you know what I like too...

All my friends, I heard you say you tweeted me. They tweeted from Manila and they tweeted from Iceland and from Italy. Yes, exactly. Now if you were in Italy, you would use *finocchio*. I think they call it, the fennel. This has amazing flavor and probably one of my favorite aromatics, don't you agree?

Comerford: Yes, it has that licorice taste that the kids love.

Smith: What you can do...Some people stuff the turkey, you know what, I was just doing some research on stuffing and stuff. The whole idea of the whole cornbread dressing we're going to make, we do not stuff a bird in the south we dress a bird. We don't put an outfit on, we make this whole ... The fact was it



tasted better and of course probably safety was to do it separate. So what I'm doing is I have my turkey, my aromatics, which I'm going to add here. As you can tell too, I've got some herbs, and then we can add some celery. What do you put on yours?

Comerford: Actually, Filipinos we love rice, obviously. So for our turkey, we do it the traditional way because we are Americans when we come to the States, but then at the same time, we infuse a lot of our immigrant history. So even side-by-side with your turkey, we have our *adobo*, we have our *pancit*, and we have our *lumpia*. It's really a good mixture of the two different cultures.

Smith: You would just, I would imagine, you would just, like when we talk about the stuffing, you probably use the pan de sal, the sweet bread.

Comerford: Yes, the pan de sal, our wonderful bread.

Smith: Remember you just need a great turkey. You need to season it with salt and pepper, some fresh herbs, some thyme, some rosemary, and some sage, and then we've got some aromatics. Most importantly, you got to have onions and garlic. Very, very important with some carrots. Those are all really particular. All I do is just take some extra virgin olive oil. And I just put it on there. Poof... it's simple. Put it in a 400 degree oven. Do you do that?

Comerford: Do you have to do the poof?

Smith: Yes. The poof is very important. Chef Wes, can you put our turkey in the oven? Can you start with that cranberry? I'm doing all the talking. You're a fantastic chef. How would you do this, the cranberries?

Comerford: The thing with the cranberry dressing that would go with our turkey, it's really up to you and your taste. For me, the recipe behind bag is not bad, but I still want to incorporate my own style and my own taste. So look at these wonderful turkeys that are from Vermont. We're going to start first with our orange juice. And one good thing with orange juice, it could be fresh or you could just use grocery bought. You just want to reduce that a little bit. So, I have a hot pan in here. You want to get that aroma working. You smell it? It fogs over my eyeglasses. I want to add these wonderful cranberries right here. They are nice and plump; they're not wrinkled and dry. It's a very, very simple recipe. You know.

Smith: So, Chris, if you didn't have cranberries you could use what?

Comerford: You could use dried fruit. For example, in the Middle East, you have a lot dates. You have a lot of wonderful, wonderful figs. In Greece, you might have this wonderful dried figs and nuts as well. Instead of the cranberry, we could use that. But then, that would tend to be very sweet, so you might want to offset it with something acidic like lemon or balsamic vinegar to counter-balance the sweetness of the fruit itself. And then this little, I love it, it's orange zest. We kind of zest around it but make sure you don't take the pith out because it tends to be bitter. We'll just sprinkle just enough around it. This



wonderful recipe has these wonderful roasted Asian apples. See this thing right here. They're kind of like Asian pears.

Smith: These are very common all throughout Asia, right?

Comerford: All throughout Asia, you can get it in Mainland China, Southeast Asia. It's something; it almost has tastes like a jicama, apple and a pear.

Smith: When we think of chutney and everything, we have to thank the Chinese. The Chinese are the ones that bring us the wonderful relishes and chutneys and things we love so much. I truly, truly love them. It's really great. One of the things that Cris and I talked about is that you can make it a little more sour if you wish and less sweet, or a little more sweet and less sour. But I love that. It's a simple recipe. It's just one large navel orange, which we squeezed in there. We've got some cranberries. You can use frozen or you can do fresh. We got some pear.

Comerford: But I have to show you this thing. This is crystallized ginger. You can buy this pretty much everywhere right now. You could go to just a normal supermarket or even some local food source or even a farm stand.

Smith: I love it. I just love to eat it, don't you?

Comerford: Yeah. It's really, really sweet. It's good. But, it adds another layer of flavor. And of course, to our Asian community there, it's a nod to you. It's wonderful.

Smith: You could put lemongrass in there, couldn't you?

Comerford: You could, yes, of course, yes. And you could even, you know, grate some fresh ginger to it.

Smith: Or you know what you could do, too, we could put a cinnamon stick and what about some star anise? This is very common. We'll just add that in there.

Comerford: Yes, just add it in there. And just let it cook down. And what happens when it cooks down, all the flavors will melt together. It's going to be a real happy family in there.

Smith: I like that. A happy, happy family. Friendly flavors. And then, of course, I like to add little toasted almonds.

Comerford: Yes, I love, I love nuts. Almonds are such a very good property. Very nutritional, it is something that is protein-laden, has a lot of anti-oxidants. So if you're into a healthy kick, it's a good thing to add in your chutney as well.



Smith: I love that. This chutney is delicious. It's easy. As you can tell, we just put it together. Quite honestly, you put whatever different types of things you want to put together. You know what, let's talk about stuffing.

Comerford: Okay, let's talk about stuffing. Are you putting it together right now?

Smith: Yes. What I did, I put a little butter and olive together; what that does is keep your butter from burning. Do you ever do that? Just put a little olive oil and butter. And we have some chopped onion. We have some chopped celery. And then we have some smoked turkey. Also, what does that do, the onions and the celery and we can add garlic. In the south, we call it the Holy Trinity. Some people call it *sofrito*, right? It's a foundation of cooking.

Comerford: It's aromatic.

Smith: Exactly. It adds so much, much flavor. So I want to add those. Now we are talking about dressing the turkey, as opposed to stuffing the turkey.

Comerford: So what does your family do?

Smith: We dress the turkey, honey. And this is a recipe, now, this is a variation of my mother, Addie Mae. Don't you just love that? In the South you have two names I guess if you forget one, you remember the second one. That's my most favorite thing. I love the fact is that I'm able to make recipes of my mothers and grandmothers, wherever I go.

Comerford: It gives you the wonderful feeling of nostalgic home and all those wonderful things

Smith: Look at that, those smells. The whole thing about Thanksgiving is it's all about smells, isn't it?

Comerford: When you walk in, you smell the celery, you smell the onion, you smell the herbs. It really speaks of the holiday.

Smith: So, we put our Holy Trinity in there. I love that. You know what I think I want to do. I want to put in some garlic, okay. Would you hand me a little? That would be great, thank you.

Okay, tell me about something. You know, I love Chef Wes, he would not even remotely think about using dry poultry spice. Because it's just too, too strong. So what we have here. We've got some fresh sage, we've got some thyme, and we've got some parsley. Now, let me explain, very simple, what we're doing is we're cooking the onions and celery, and then we were going to add these wonderful herbs. The next thing is we'll add our smoke sausage. And then, this is where you can do your variation. Now if you want to do it vegan, you can omit the smoked turkey, which is also quite good, because of all the flavors is in the vegetables.



Comerford: And in the north, northeast, they do a lot of oyster stuffing. I love smoked oysters. It's one of our favorite home recipes.

Smith: I love that. That's really delicious. But here's what makes that stuffing or dressing very special. In the south, we use cornbread. Now, you may not be able to buy cornbread or make cornbread. So I remember one time, I was cooking somewhere and I actually used polenta.

Comerford: Polenta is good.

Smith: Exactly. I always think of polenta as kind of Italian grits.

Comerford: Because that is what it really is.

Smith: And it's really wonderful. So now the next thing I'm going to do is I'm going to add our smoked turkey. Again, you don't have to add if you wish.

Comerford: But if you're like from India or like other countries that might not have cornbread or the type of bread that we use, they could incorporate whatever types of bread that they have already.

Smith: *Naan*, couldn't you do *naan* bread?

Comerford: Of course.

Smith: And if you're in Israel you could use *matzo*. Any kind of wonderful bread would be really, really wonderful.

Comerford: And even in terms of the herbs, you're not tied into the thyme and the parsley and the sage. If you're huge into cilantro and peppers and stuff like that, I love cilantro in everything.

Smith: I do too.

Comerford: So, I tend to use it for a lot of my recipes.

Smith: What are your favorite memories of Thanksgiving?

Comerford: My favorite memory of Thanksgiving is really just hanging out in the kitchen. For some reason, no matter how big or small your house is, or your kitchen, everybody just gathers around the kitchen. As a chef, it's a big treat for me because now you have sous chefs that are helping you at the same time. You're not the only one cooking and tiring. It's everybody working together.

Smith: I think that is the really big key with cooking.

Comerford: You see this right now. Isn't it beautiful?



Smith: Wow! You just whipped that up. Poof! I'm telling you.

Kass: Art and Chris, I have a question for you. I have two questions. First of all, Art, what's the difference between dressing and stuffing a turkey?

Smith: Okay, what's the difference between dressing and stuffing?

Comerford: A turkey, yes.

Smith: Well stuffing the turkey is literally you actually stuff the turkey. Dressing, when I did some research, Sam, and what I found was that what happened was they would bake the stuffing separately. They would do it as a casserole. This is something that became popular probably in the 1940's and 30's. But that's the difference. It's usually separate. And the other thing too, in the south, when you think of dressing, it usually refers only to cornbread. One of the things, too I also found that too some people prefer a mixture of cornbread and toasted bread crumbs.

Kass: Got it. It sounds delicious. I've got a question from Romania.

Smith: Romania, I love that.

Kass: This question really gets to the heart and soul of Thanksgiving. I know you're getting there but we've got to know what is the secret to perfect gravy. Because everybody has their own gravy and I've got to be honest, it's my favorite part of Thanksgiving.

Smith: Hello everybody in Romania. I love Romania. I love cabbage rolls, they're so fantastic. And they make this wonderful cherry, it's so delicious. Okay. The secret is: if you watch this woman making the turkey, all these wonderful vegetables at the bottom of the pan that, with the turkey, is just resting on that wonderful delicious aromatic wrath, that's where the wonderful flavors for the gravy comes from. What we're going to do is pour off the fat after the turkey's roasted, and then we're going to take that pan, and then we're going to put a little turkey broth or chicken broth in there and that's going to take the wonderful juices. The French call that *phon*. And that will release all the flavors, and we'll put it right into the sauté pan. And then what you can do is you can make a roux, that's just a little flour or a beurre manie.

Comerford: Beurre manie.

Smith: Yes, exactly. I speak southern, not French. [Laughter.]

Comerford: That sounds okay.

Smith: But that is truly the flavor because what you want to do you want to get the juices, the natural juices from the turkey along with those aromatic vegetables that are cooked with the turkey to get that



really great flavor. I know when you're really busy sometimes it's easier to use something instant, but you know what it's so much better when you make it and it's so healthy, much more healthy for you. Not so high in sodium. Perfect. See.

Comerford: Perfect. It looks good. Where are we going to put it? In a casserole?

Smith: We'll put it in a casserole. With the magic of television we have one baking. So what we're doing is adding a little bit of the broth. Do you know what my mother does? She makes a very interesting one. Something that's very popular here in the Washington-Virginia area, it's spoon bread.

Comerford: Yes, spoon bread I love spoon bread.

Smith: They would take the same recipe and add eggs and milk to it, and they would make almost like a pudding, where they would bake it and spoon it out. Have you had it like that before?

Comerford: That way it's portioned out, and it's easier rather. You can put it in a muffin tin, and it's ready to go.

Smith: I love that. It's really easy. But just remember, a really delicious stuffing or dressing, or whatever you wish to call, is just really simple. Remember, it's all about the aromatics, and Thanksgiving is all about that -- about the onions and celery and garlic and then the fresh herbs with the sage and the thyme and the rosemary and the bay leaf. Really wonderful. And of course, the bread. If you don't have cornbread, use *naan* or you can use white bread or *pandesal*. Whatever you wish. And then you don't have to use the turkey sausage, you can make it vegan. Quite honestly, Thanksgiving can be a wonderful meatless meal too.

Comerford: Yes, and while you're working on that now you see the chutney and how everything is kind of melded together in this wonderful, wonderful reduction. And it really complements with the fatness.

Kass: Chef Cris, you make the best turkey that I've ever tasted, and you make a lot of them.

Comerford: He's so sweet. Yes.

Kass: Our audience in Romania, they want to know, can you give us a few simple tips? What are the key things they got to keep in mind if they want to cook or smoke a great turkey?

Comerford: The best key to making a great turkey, it's really like getting your oven hot like what you mentioned earlier, 450, just brown it off so the skin gets crisp. It's like searing a meat on the stovetop. And then once you get to that point, you turn your heat very, very low. Roasting is about slow and low.

Smith: And, when you're roasting, how many minutes do you roast per pound?



Comerford: It's per pound. Technically, it's half an hour per pound. And of course you have to rely on a meat thermometer because sometimes your oven at home is not like the oven that we have at work, that is pretty good and accurate so you have to rely on taking the temperature on the thigh leg part of the meat.

Smith: Exactly. So that's really important too.

Kass: And chef, so once you're one, once you take it out of the oven, is it ready to go or do you need to let it sit for a while? What's a tip about when you should actually serve your turkey?

Smith: I think we both agree. it needs to take a rest, don't you agree?

Comerford: It needs to take a rest. Just like the rest of us. After cooking, we take a break and then we watch the football game.

Smith: Exactly.

Comerford: How long do you rest your turkey?

Smith: You know what I do? I take my turkey and I take two china plates and turn them upside down, and I sit the turkey on that so the air can circulate, and then the juices flow into that pan, and that becomes that wonderful, you know, for the gravy. And I let it rest usually about 10 to 12 minutes. If you find that you're going to rest a bit longer you can always reheat it slightly in the oven while you get everything together. Keep in mind too, Sam, I think it's important to stress to your audience that all this can be made ahead of time and reheated. It's really simple. The holidays, we love the food, but most importantly the holidays is about sharing with people that you care and giving thanks for.

Comerford: It's about community and family and sharing with our family and friends.

Kass: So we have another question. Romania's really...

Smith: We love Romania.

Kass: Romania's asking away this morning; it's so exciting. Here's a little bit of a curveball. There's a lot of different ways that we're eating these days. So what would you advise folks who are vegetarians around the world to do for thanksgiving?

Smith: Well I think that one, all these recipes that we showed you except the turkey, you don't have to include meat in them. I personally think that for doing, for the main, for like the turkey, I would do wonderful root vegetables that you roast whole. Do you agree?

Comerford: Yes. Root vegetables are really good and satisfying. Like for me, and also tofu. I'm such a big fan of tofu, and people look at me funny when I say that. For me, tofu is just as satisfying as turkey meat



and stuff like that. You can cook with whatever aromatics. With the same flavoring and same flavor notes that you have with the turkey.

Smith: I love, like faro. I think it's really wonderful, and I think those nutty grains also can add, and they have protein in them and they also would be also something that you could serve with the roasted root vegetables that would give that wonderful specialness to the meal. And then of course you can make the dressing vegan and just omit, use vegetable stock and you don't have to use eggs in the cornbread. Cornbread is basically just water and cornmeal.

Comerford: And a lot of beans, like lentils for example. I've made meatloaf out of lentils. You don't even need a binder. It's really, really super packed in itself. It's very flavorful between your leeks, your celery, your herbs and thyme. You put that on a low fan. You turn it over. It gives a feel of like you're really eating something like a roasted meat.

Smith: It does. Keep in mind, too, when it comes to the holidays and Thanksgiving, it's all what your family will love and enjoy. So what might be something that you enjoy and celebrate that. Again it's a meal that comes together. I also love a potluck Thanksgiving where everyone makes something. I think is really nice. The toughest thing for Thanksgiving and for most people is the actual preparation and stuff. Speaking of preparation we're going to get ready for the meal and everything. And they're expecting you in the dining room.

Comerford: I know they are. I'm getting ready.

Smith: I'm excited, they're going to talk about Native American foods and stuff like that.

Kass: Art and Cris we're so excited to try those dishes, they just look absolutely delicious. There are so many interesting facts about the first Thanksgiving feast almost 400 years ago when American Indians shared their native foods of the land with the immigrant pilgrims. To tell us more about the history of the first Thanksgiving, we're joined now by another great chef, a good friend of mine, Richard Hetzler.

Richard is the Executive Chef at the café at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. Richard helped to create the five unique regional menus of truly one-of-a-kind dining experience that reflects the museum's mission to educate visitors about Native American cultures. He's also published an award-winning cookbook based on his work at the museum. Thank you so much for joining us, Richard. We're so excited to have you here. Would you please tell our viewers about the first Thanksgiving?

Chef Hetzler: Well, thanks for having me. I think it's interesting. My perspective, being the chef at the American Indian museum is really looking at the history and the culture behind it. The first Thanksgiving comes into play and it really, I think, when I think of it, really looking at what it is, it talks about how



native Americans were with the land and the synergy with which they brought everything together and how they used every piece of everything they did, whether it's the land or whether it's an animal.

If we think back to history and we think about what it was, if it really wasn't for the Native Americans, the settlers would never have survived that first winter. As the settlers came here from Europe, they tried to plant a lot of their crops they were used to growing in their area where they were from. They [the crops] didn't take here. They didn't work in this region. So what sustained them? The crops that the Native Americans were already growing. Corn that we have, for example, here. So we have, these are some examples. This is *choclo*. This is actually a big eared corn. This is actually the first traditional corn.

If you think about ingenuity of the Native Americans, corn actually grew from, basically from, a grass that they were actually able to cross pollinate to grow to what we know as corn today. We know of corn a lot different than what we see here in front of us -- a lot sweeter, a lot smaller kernel, but different. The nice thing about this is that you really get the texture out of it. It's really got a starchier flavor to it. So it's going to give you more of that, it's not as sweet as the traditional corn that we think of, but it's got a lot more starch into it. Native Americans, the interesting thing about corn is us as Europeans, we wouldn't be able to survive on corn alone, our bodies don't take it. The Native Americans were able to take the ash from the fire, mix it while they were boiling the corn, and it would create a chemical reaction, to make corn a complete protein. They were able to survive on corn alone, where today you and I, it would never work. It just doesn't work.

Some other options and some other things. This is actually the corn as well. This is the big ear corn. This is basically the corn that's on the cob. You can kind of get a closer look at it. Then we go into some of the other traditional ingredients that would have been grown at the time. Up in front we've got a couple different heirloom beans. We've got a scarlet runner bean. A scarlet runner bean is similar to a large lima bean. It's got that kind of real strong texture. It's got a nice bite to it. So when you cook it, it's going to hold up really well.

And then we've got a couple different squashes. And squashes were very big to the Native Americans. They were really the first to cultivate squash in North America and then to branch out to the rest of the world. And for some of our viewers that don't really have the traditional squashes, like we have the acorn squash -- there's a golden acorn and a green acorn that we're showing there -- we've got some of the Asian varieties. There's a delicata and the kabash. Those are Asian varieties of winter squashes. Most squashes nowadays are growing pretty much all over the world so they're able to kind of much intermix. You know, a squash and a pumpkin, they're all pretty much in the same family so you can kind of use them intermittently depending on the recipe that you might have.

Kass: Yeah. The First Lady, one of the first things she did when she got to the White House was to plant a garden on the south grounds. And she really cares about our food and our children, where our food comes from and how it impacts the health of our kids. One of the most special moments we had was



planting with Indian leaders a Three Sisters garden. In fact, part of that, was we grew those beans right there [scarlet runner beans]. Could you tell a little bit about the relationship between these plants?

Hetzler: I think it goes into the synergy. And when we talk about Three Sisters, that name came from Native Americans because of the synergy and how they would grow. Native Americans would use mound growing in the sense that they would have a high mound. They would actually plant the corn so that the corn would be the stalk that the bean could grow up. And then they'd have the squash which would shade the ground. So, traditionally, when corn grows, it takes nitrogen from the soil. The beans would add nitrogen back in and the squash would shade the ground to keep the ground moist. So the three grew in synergy together, hence the name the Three Sisters that kind of came out from that.

Kass: Yeah. And I'll say, we've grown a lot. We've done many different seasons of growing there. And that plot did better than anything. The squash went crazy. The beans were going nuts, and we had the most beautiful blue native corn that I've ever seen. It was just amazing.

Hetzler: And that's the interesting thing that most people don't realize is that it's not just white and yellow corn anymore that you see, but that there is yellow, there's orange, there's purple. There're all these different varieties of corn that have been growing here for thousands and thousands of years. The Native Americans were really on the forefront of farming and cultivating to help have what we have today.

Kass: So Richard, we have a question from Romania. What was served at those early Thanksgivings back in the early 1600s?

Hetzler: Well, I think if you look at the regions we're talking about, we're talking about the Massachusetts and Cape Cod regions. If you look at the foods that were available there, turkey obviously would have been on it. Native Americans donated five venison or five deer to the first Thanksgiving. So deer obviously would have been in there. But if you think of the lakes and the estuaries where they were from, they probably had oysters, they had lobsters, they had clams, mussels. They had a lot of those things that we see every day now that they probably would have had at that first Thanksgiving.

Kass: And then, what about, say, 200 years later, like 1863? What was being served then?

Hetzler: I think that's when we kind of started really getting traditional. I think turkey started to become a staple at Thanksgiving. But I think, like you said, it comes to the family and what people want. I would bet venison have been on there throughout the years and now people have kind of started to come to their own and put their own twist on it.

Kass: So, another participant asks whether Indians celebrate the harvest or Thanksgiving today.



Hetzler: I think this whole celebration started from the harvest. Traditionally in Native American culture, there's a huge, huge push around food because food was life. It's not like that for us anymore today. There was always a celebration around food. Whenever anything ever happened within the community, it always revolved around food. So I would think even though now it's still considered a Thanksgiving tradition it still has to do with the harvest.

Kass: I think it's important to remember we sort of take for granted that there's food all year round as much as we want, whenever we want it, at least in America, and that's not true in many countries around the world. But you know harvest, back then, meant that you were going to be able to make it through the winter. If you didn't have a bountiful harvest, it was going to be really tough to survive. So this celebrating and giving thanks, it was truly giving thanks for life. That's why I think in America it's a really important time to reflect on just how blessed we all are and how lucky we are to have our family and to have the food that's going to sustain us over time. I think it is truly a wonderful tradition.

Hetzler: Yes. I think it's a great tradition. It's been able to really survive over the years and it really shows just the family, the community and how things come together and how we work together. We talk about some of these items; we've got dried cranberries down in front here. This is just another way of saying they would take these cranberries and how they would dry them and use them throughout the winter time when they wouldn't necessarily have those harvesting of that product.

Kass: We have a group at our U.S. Embassy in Namibia who would like to know if there's a difference between preparing fresh versus frozen cranberries.

Hetzler: When you look at fresh versus frozen, they're pretty much the same product. They're both going to cook down a little bit. You'll have more moisture in the frozen than the fresh obviously. So, for example, in Art's recipe where he was using the orange juice, you probably cut back on your orange juice. The nice thing about cranberries, fresh or frozen, you can cook them down and add liquid if you need to. So, there's a little bit of difference, but not much. The flavor will be pretty much the same.

Kass: One thing you'll see is, when you're dealing with cranberries, everybody has their own different way of using cranberries. Some people just do the cranberries with the turkey, some people just do the gravy with the turkey and other people will do both. You know, it depends on what your flavors are.

Hetzler: Exactly. How tart, how sweet. They're very versatile. They're a great little fruit.

Kass: So I think we need to see what's going on in the kitchen, what about you?

Hetzler: Sounds good. I can't wait to taste some of this stuff.

Kass: Thank you so much for your insight into where all this comes from and how deeply rooted in our history Thanksgiving is, and it's such a part of the history of Native Americans as well as the Pilgrims who



came to settle in the country. Let's head back in the kitchen. Art, who is going to be finishing today's feast. He'll prepare winter greens, mashed potatoes, and some pie. Art, there's no Thanksgiving without pie, am I right?

Smith: There's no Thanksgiving. What's wonderful, what we're going to show you now. We have such a rich African American history in North America. And I want to show you some wonderful dishes that were created by an amazing woman, B. Smith, a wonderful chef here in America who has two restaurants here at Union Station. This beautiful once-model, turned restaurateur, television personality, has created these amazing recipes from her cookbook, *B. Smith Cooks*. I first want to show you these wonderful winter greens which I absolutely love. And then we're going to show you a delicious potato dish and then we're going to finish off with a pie, but it's got a little twist to it, okay?

So, winter greens. Winter greens, where I'm from, we call them collard greens. Mind you, wherever you are in the world, they have different types of greens. You may have dandelion greens; you may have escarole; you may have chickary. What we have, we have collards, which are from Africa and we have some mustard greens that are really wonderful. These have, in part, some really lovely flavor. Again we're going to start cooking again like we did before, bringing those delicious flavors.

What I like to do is, I like to add just a little bit of extra virgin olive oil to my pot. This is just a really super recipe that B. gave us and then we're going to add some onions. Again, this is like that Holy Trinity. She's taken the onions and sliced them thinly. We'll add those in there, just absolutely amazing. Get us a pot here and spoon to stir. Next thing I'm going to do, I'm going to add some garlic. Now you may not wish to have garlic but the garlic does add a certain wonderful flavor. I like it a lot. Now you want to cook those until they're nice and they're soft. And then, what I like to do, I'm going to add some bay leaves. We've got about three bay leaves.

Over here with our greens, like I said, we have the turnips and collards. As you can see, these are beautiful, beautiful leaves and these are so incredibly high in vitamins and also a wonderful meal to make vegan. What I also love to do with this, it makes the most wonderful soup. In fact, in my part of the South, in Florida, due to our Cuban heritage, we have something called *caldo gallego*, it's something really really, really wonderful. It's this collard green soup and usually served with chorizo. It's just really, really wonderful with potato and chick peas. It's absolutely amazing.

So what you do is, you take your collard greens. You see it has this rib that runs through it. You want to just peel that off, just tear that off. Keep in mind too you may not have collard greens you might have spinach. Spinach works too. You might also have frozen greens, they work too. Just remember to squeeze all the water out of them after you thaw them. You know I have taken a biscuit all over the world and I've taken greens all over the world, and you know, what's amazing is you always find that people just love good food. And there's something about the holidays and Thanksgiving food, everybody of every culture just so much loves.



Okay, the onions are nice and wonderful, the garlic, the bay leaves, and then what I'm going to is, I'm going to add a little bit of smoked turkey. This wonderful smoked turkey sausage is just really delicious and you don't have to add that. That's really wonderful. And then the other thing, I'd like to add a little chili. So, we're going to take our greens and just pour those in there. Great. And then what I like to do is add some sea salt. I'm not big on iodized salt because you can't feel it, you want to feel it, you want to pinch it. You never want to measure salt because, again, what it does, it keeps you aware of how much sodium you use. Another thing I like to do is I like to add some dry thyme. B. adds the dry thyme which is really wonderful. I love it. She adds a little black pepper. And then the chili flakes, which add just a really tremendous flavor. You may not like chili flakes but I'm going to tell you something, a little hit never hurt anybody, I'm telling you. It's really delicious. So we're going to take those. So super. I'm going to add a little bit of this sausage in there. Perfect. You just want to kind of sauté those a little bit like that. Okay, wonderful. And then what I have is, you can use chicken broth or turkey broth, or even just vegetable broth if you're making it vegan. We're going to add vegetable broth. Beautiful. Absolutely wonderful. What's great about this is you make it ahead of time. This is a fantastic ahead of time dish you can put in your freezer after you make it or your refrigerator. Thank you B., for this wonderful recipe.

Okay, I want to tell you something. The holidays are all about the potato. Thanks to Peru we have potatoes. The Peruvians have been growing potatoes for a long, long time. And B. does these amazing Dijon mashed potatoes. What we started with, we've got about two pounds of russet potatoes, which we've peeled and we've cubed. You can see we've got them all ready there, nice and easy. We've got some buttermilk. We're going to add some buttermilk. And, what we're going to do is we've already cooked these until they're nice and tender. They're almost falling apart. The next thing we're going to do is we're going to add some butter. I want to tell you something, butter, it's the holidays, you're not on a diet, you're having a good time. Add the butter. Perfect. B.'s secret ingredient. And, thanks to the French, Dijon mustard; Dijon mustard has that wonderful kind of heat to it and a wonderful lovely earthiness that I love. We'll add plops of that. I love that. And then, what we do is just mash it. I kind of like rustic potatoes. I know some people, "I like potatoes smooth, I like them rustic." I like them kind of on the rustic side because you know they're homemade, okay. That's really, really nice. Being a chef everyone assumes everything's homemade. Okay. Let's put it this way. You can just kind of mix it up. You can have homemade and not so homemade. You can mix it together. But no one told you that. For other great secrets you can always tweet me at @chefartsmith. Just take that. B., loving this. Beautiful. I'm so hungry. Many times at Thanksgiving, you would have mashed sweet potatoes. But we're going to tell you what we did with the sweet potatoes because I want to tell you something, we've got a pie that will make you see stars. It's been served to stars. B.'s served every star with this pie. Take our potatoes, mash them up. Then what I'm going to do is add some chives, fresh chopped chives, not those dried ones. You may not have fresh chives, but it makes a huge difference. Add those. Fantastic. I love it.

Okay, pie. Since the Revolutionary War, since the 1700s, America loves pie. Now America, of course, loves pie because of the English. And they love savory pies, but what really became very fashionable in



those countries is sweet pies. Believe it or not, pie was a favorite breakfast treat. I wish that treat was still around because I love pie. Now B. has come up with an amazing sweet potato pie. We love sweet potatoes. Thanks to Africa, we have another amazing vegetable that has so much flavor and so good for you. What we've done is taken about, we've taken some sweet potatoes which we've already mashed. You can see in there. Get those running? We baked them in the oven. Take your sweet potato. You want to take about, you know, probably about a pound or two of sweet potatoes that we roasted in the oven until soft, about 350 degrees. You can take a knife and pierce them. If they're soft, they're perfect. What happens too they start oozing their juices and that's really amazing. We put the sweet potatoes in the mixer. The next thing we're going to do is, we're going to add a little flour. About three fourths of flour. Okay. I've got some sugar. Now for the sugar you can use brown sugar, you can use white sugar, you can use agave, whatever you want. Just add a little sugar. Next what I'm going to do is add some cinnamon and cloves. We've got three eggs beating. The eggs actually make it much more custardy and delicious.

Smith: What I like to do is when I'm in my mixer here is speed it up like that, turn it off, and just kind of take your spatula. You might say, Art, I don't have a mixer. You can do it with a fork. My mother does it with a fork. You know, in South Africa we would make pies, and we'd make them with butternut squash, really delicious, really wonderful. The girls really loved that. That was probably one of my most memorable Thanksgivings because we had all these amazing children from across South Africa, of all different cultures and religions. And the meal had to be halal. And I remember taking this American meal to South Africa and creating, and getting these amazing flavors which is really nice.

Just whip it. And then what I'm going to do is I'm going to add some butter. Now the recipes are all there for you to see and you can use and keep in mind you can kind of fudge on them but they still work, okay. I love a recipe that still works. Okay. There we have it. That is really, really amazing. What I can do, too, is, we can add a little cream to that just to enrich it. Perfect, okay. Great.

Kass: Hey Art, I couldn't agree with you more about Thanksgiving being a time to not worry about eating all healthy and just enjoy your food. But I got to be honest there, man. That was a lot of sugar in that pie. I know you like sweet pies and all, but man.

Smith: Honey, there's a lot of sugar in here, okay? But we're making it wonderful. Chef Wes, do you want to come take this off for us?

But I do agree, Sam. You don't need to add so much sugar to it. What you can do, you can cut that down. One of the things –

Thank you Chef Wes. Everybody, this is Chef Wes from Art and Soul here in Washington. Thank you very much. Chef, do you want to put that inside our pre-prepared pie shells for me? Perfect.

What you can do is, I would just, I've also sometimes cut down the sugar particularly when I'm making hummingbird cake, I cut the sugar about half and add applesauce. I think you can do the same thing.



Now, what B. has done is, we've already had these pre-prepared pie crusts. You can use any pie crust that you wish. Or you can buy them too. It's really nice. Quite honest with you, you can make them without the crust, which I've done before.

We're almost there, Sam and Cris and everybody. It's really wonderful. And I can't wait for us to all try this amazing meal. I just wish everybody out there can taste it too.

Kass: We are so hungry, Art. We can't stand waiting any longer. I don't know about you guys, but if you could hurry up, Art. We're dying over here.

Smith: Sam, do we have we got any questions from people?

Kass: We don't have any questions from out in the world. Chefs, do you have any questions about anything that he's doing?

Cris: Yeah, I mean, I've seen you do the sweet potato pie. Do you have any good recipes for apple pie because it's such an American tradition?

Smith: You know, Cris, I love apple pie. One of the things I like to do and when I'm making like crust...usually when I make a pie crust I usually use probably two cups of flour to a fourth cup of butter. What I do is I work that in and with a little just water. What you can do is you can add some toasted chopped, very chopped, coarsely chopped nuts and incorporate that into the crust. You can also add a little, just a little bit, of shredded cheddar cheese in the crust. It's quite a New England tradition to serve cheddar cheese with apple pie which is really nice. What I like to do with my apple pie, I think what makes a really wonderful apple pie is to use different types of apples. You can use some red delicious jonagolds, different types, I use all different types of apples. I find if you mix up the apples it has a much flavor. Also too if you pile them high, it may look like there's too much in there but as it cooks...Again, pie again is like everything else. You want to start your pie in a really hot oven, about 400 degrees. What you do is after the pie bakes for, probably 10 to 15 minutes, you want to reduce the heat and put a piece of foil, you want to tent it with foil. You want to continue baking it for about 20 minutes more. And then what's going to happen is, it's going to settle and when you see the juices oozing the pie, that's why it's important to put a pan under it to keep the juices from going to the bottom of the oven. I like to add, what's really great too is very common too in this country is to throw in cranberries with the apple which is quite nice and delicious, you can add ginger in that which is delicious, but really, really super.

Kass: Art, there's three kinds of people in America. There's the people who eat pie with ice cream, there are people who eat pie with whipped cream, and the purists who don't eat anything with their pie they just eat it straight. Art, what kind of pie man are you?

Smith: Pie in hand, and pie in mouth. Okay. I like it, I pretty much, I mean, it's not uncommon for me to grab a piece of pecan pie and just grab it and eat it with my hands. You know, where I grew up in the



South, Sam, it was very common to have hand pies as they called them, and they would make them with dried apples. What they did was they would take the apples and freshen them back where they would soften them back up and then put sugar and cinnamon. They would make a crust just like we talked about and they would make like a turnover and then they would fry them. That was very common. They called them hand pies. They are really super nice. After going to fancy cooking schools, I loved like a *galette*, which is what the French would do, which is when you take the pastry and you just roll out a sheet and you take your pie and just fold the pies together and put it in the oven is really, really simple. But to me, the best pie is a pie that you can pick up with your hands like this and eat it is absolutely delicious.

Kass: I agree. You really can't go wrong with pie. I will say that I am a purist. I don't eat anything with my pie. I like it straight.

Smith: Wonderful. Yes, I agree with you Sam. And it truly is something, the simpler it is the better and I think it's really nice. But look at this. Aren't those delicious? And people will just really enjoy that. But go ahead.

Kass: You look like you're almost done.

Smith: I am almost done. We're going to come and we're going to serve you.

Kass: Why don't you come join us in the dining room? Join Richard and Cris and I and talk more about Thanksgiving and taste some of these great dishes. We're been sitting here. It's been a tease, we've got to taste this.

Smith: It can be a team effort, y'all can come and help me clean it up. Boy, I'll tell you something.

Kass: We have some dishes, huh? It's about doing this together. That's what Thanksgiving is all about. You cook together and you've got to clean up together.

Smith: I just want to say a big thank you to B. Smith for her wonderful recipes, which are really super, super nice.

Kass: B. is an American icon. She's been doing so much to enrich American food tradition for so long. And we're so grateful for all that she's done for so many decades.

We have friends from around the world watching today's live broadcast. We really appreciate all the interest and enthusiasm in sharing our holiday traditions and our foods, and we would love to hear your questions or comments about the recipes prepared today. We want to know about your own family traditions and recipes, and the history of Thanksgiving in America. So Art, Richard, and Chris, let's sample some of these great dishes and talk a little bit more what we all are thankful for and some of our international influences you've each had in your cooking and in your careers. So, Cris maybe you can



start off. What are some of the ways that the world and your experiences have really influenced how you cook?

Comerford: Greatly. Especially being an immigrant from the Philippines when we came to this country, when we had our first Thanksgiving in 1984, it's such a new thing for me. But to realize that it is a symbol for America and the opportunities we have here. You're so blessed. You have to be thankful for your family, everything that you have. But then we've incorporated a culture in there. He was talking about a pie earlier. Do you know what we do in the Philippines? We do a mock apple pie because apples are not native to the Philippines so we use *chayote* squash, in lieu of the apples. When you make the apple pie itself it does not taste like *chayote*. You wouldn't notice it. Once you put the cinnamon and the lemons in there, it tastes just like apple pie.

Hetzler: I think that's the unique thing, like Art said, where they used butternut squash in South Africa. You can use these indigenous ingredients that are locally grown in your country. And really figure out how to make them work in these everyday recipes that we would use here in the United States. Figuring out the like-for-like ingredients, like an apple or a pear, things like that that really work well together.

Comerford: How about you, Sam? What's your family tradition?

Kass: You know, Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. Because it's not about gifts or anything else except for the most important things in our lives, which is our family and our health and being together and food; obviously, it doesn't get more important for us than food. I just remember, you know, family coming together at a time when it's hard to see everybody. Having big debates about all kinds of important issues, discussing what's happening in everybody's lives. But all cooking together and all being about love. That's what I remember. But I trained overseas, I trained in Europe, I trained in Vienna and I was just starting out in my first year. My first year of really cooking, I didn't know anything about food. And they said, they asked me to cook Thanksgiving dinner but that was a very highfalutin restaurant so we tried to do it all fancy but we didn't have any turkey -- they didn't have a lot of turkeys over there -- so we had to take a turkey breast and sort of cut it open and roll it up with stuffing. But I never cooked like that before. So, rice stuffing went everywhere. It wasn't the smoothest of Thanksgivings. But it ended up working. It tasted great.

Smith: I've had a lot of ugly food that tasted really good, and had some pretty stuff that didn't taste good.

Kass: That's how it goes. So maybe let's take some of the questions. Because questions are rolling in. So we have a question from Poland, everybody. They're asking is Thanksgiving celebrated differently in different states? Does it break down by state or is it more...how does it change throughout the country?

Smith: It's a national holiday, and I think the only difference is, I think, wouldn't you think that some people have the meal in the morning or at noon and some people have it in the evening. And I think it all



has to do with how fast it takes the family to get to one location and also depends on how late the football game is because it's amazing how the sports element of Thanksgiving is an important part of it.

Kass: If you think about it, it's the one day that the entire country, and this is a big country, is all eating basically the same meal. It really helps bring people together and connect us in a way that there's sort of no other moment that's like that. But it does, it's deeply influenced by the region. If you go to the south, the flavors and spices in the south are just going to be so much different than if you're in the north. If you're out west where it's warm, the food they have available it's going to be different. So I wouldn't say it breaks down by state exactly but I think regionally. People express their heritage and their culture through Thanksgiving although we're all eating basically the same thing.

Hetzler: And incorporating those different flavors into it, like you said. Like in the South, deep frying the turkey. Got to have the deep fried turkey.

Kass: The south will deep fry turkey. You didn't see it here.

Hetzler: We're not smoking and we're not roasting, we're deep frying in the south.

Kass: One of our participants wants to know if there's any similarity between turkey we eat at Thanksgiving and the turkeys that are eaten throughout the rest of the year. Are they the same kind of bird? Is there anything special about this bird?

Smith: What's interesting too, and I'm proud to say, is that you find that now the more heritage breeds now have become much more popular. These larger birds which were more commercially raised, people, they're still eating, but the smaller, and probably actually, you know, this probably was the size of the turkey that our forefathers ate. So I think that that's something that I think is really wonderful. And also has a really amazing flavor.

Kass: Great. Should we dig in?

Smith: I think so.

Comerford: We've been waiting for you to say that.

Kass: Look at this great food. Art, are you going to do some carving?

Smith: Yeah, I'm going to carve here. I'm a little wired for sound over here, but what I'm going to do is, I'm going to just take this...You ever wonder how the person in the family felt, the one who had to carve the turkey?

Comerford: It's normally the head of the house, the father normally.

Kass: The pressure's on, Art. Wow this looks absolutely amazing.



Smith: My favorite part of Thanksgiving, I have to say, are the smells. I think the aromas of the food is just absolutely delicious.

Kass: So another question from our audience. Do young Americans keep Thanksgiving traditions? How do you see the holiday? Is it just a big party or a family holiday? How do they understand it?

Comerford: I think it's more of a time together. I have about 30 nieces and nephews within the age of 12 to 30 and that runs around the house during Thanksgiving. For them, it's time to connect with each other as cousins, do a video game downstairs, do some board game so it's really a time of connectedness, so it's really cool.

Kass: Art, you can't skip on the gravy.

Smith: Let me get you some turkey.

Kass: Richard, what were you saying?

Hetzler: I think it's how traditions grow, as well. When you're younger and like you said you're running around the house playing video games and having a good time. But as you start to get older, you start to realize that "mom did her wild mushroom stuffing this way every year and I want to carry it on" or "grandma who is not here anymore did cranberries this way." It's a way for us to connect with loved ones that might not necessarily be there or that are still there and carry on those pieces that you don't see every day.

Kass: I think it's a real time to pass on cooking knowledge, as well. And I think because it's something we're doing every year from the time kids are very, very young, kids don't... It's not sort of like a party, it's more of a time to do the family, you're in the kitchen, you're working, you're cooking, but it's always festive. But here's a question that I actually don't know the answer to and I hope you guys do. Do Canadians celebrate Thanksgiving?

Smith: They do, they really do. But they have it early.

Comerford: They have a different date for it.

Smith: It's in late September, early October, that they would have it. But they do like a lot of the same treats that we do.

Kass: Got it. So here's a question, it will be telling to see who takes this question. So it's a question about shopping. So are stores closed on Thanksgiving and is shopping a big part of Thanksgiving?

Comerford: I think it has evolved through the years, and there are shops right now which are very, very good in a way that had a moratorium. It's really a time for family and togetherness. It's not about



shopping and Black Friday, it's really about connecting at a table like this and being unified with just the same food and the same traditions that we pass on.

Kass: So this is a question that I think, Chef, you're in the best position to answer. I could maybe help out. What kind of menu do you prepare for visiting officials?

Comerford: For visiting officials, what we try to do is showcase the best of American hospitality. It's really like any heads of state who come to the White House would get the best taste of whatever's grown locally or regionally so we want to represent like fish, let's say, from Maine. And, if it's the season for crabs in Chesapeake. It's really highlighting what's best of the United States.

Kass: I'll kick this to you again and I'll help you out after. Does the First Family, the Obamas, have any special vegetables that they particularly enjoy? And does President Obama have a favorite dessert? I would say that, that's top secret information. I don't think we'll be able to disclose that. But what are some of the things you love to prepare for them?

Comerford: The cool thing with the vegetables is having the kitchen garden outside; it gives us the whole availability of the whole season, the whole year. So in terms of a favorite, it's really whatever's growing and calling Sam's name or my name or Tommy's name. Whatever's ready, that's what we cook for the First Family.

Kass: So being able to go down there and pick from the garden so we do a lot of greens, we do a lot of broccoli, green beans. And you know, in terms of dessert, what we can say is that pie is his favorite dessert. Although it's a Thanksgiving tradition, we carry that tradition throughout the year. And we're all very thankful. So I think we should try this.

Smith: I think so too.

Kass: What do you think?

Smith: I think so, too. At this time I want to say a big thank you to everyone and to B. Smith for giving all her wonderful recipes and giving thanks to you know, the best part of Thanksgiving to me is not just the cooking but it's actually cooking for people. Isn't that fun?

Comerford: What traditionally we've done at our house, too, is that each of us will give a little thank you to something or somebody so it's a part of what we do.

Kass: Thank you so much for cooking. Thank you for being here. I want to thank Ambassador Marshall, the Blair House, and the three chefs who joined us today for this interesting discussion, Art Smith, Cris and Richard. We hope all of you around the world have enjoyed this program. Have a happy Thanksgiving everyone and thank you so much for being with us today.