



Don't want to show up empty handed during Thanksgiving? Mother is selling sweet and flaky apple pies such as this one for \$25.

OFF MENU

Thanks-vegan

/ BY LINDSAY OXFORD

That first line of *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy, the one about each unhappy family being unhappy in its own way? It's borne out in Thanksgiving meals. I spent my childhood Thanksgivings in Baltimore, my assigned seat squarely in view of my own family's unique holiday atrocities: cranberry aspic and ham-flecked sauerkraut. No wonder I went vegan.

It would be years before courage and conviction would lead me to sneak a Tofurky roast among the meat-soaked everything, its ovular and vaguely plasticine presence unnerving even me. Decades on, there are better fake meats, but nostalgia keeps that goofy little medicine ball on my holiday table.

But mystery no-meats aren't for everyone. Should you want to avoid cooking this Thanksgiving, or plan on hosting vegan guests and still feel in the dark about what "vegan" means, here are some local options to take out the guesswork:

If you're cool with supporting Jeff Bezos, submit to the Borg and get Amazon-owned Whole Foods' Creole-themed Thanksgiving meal, \$39.99 for two servings. It actually sounds pretty good: braised greens,

black-eyed pea fritters, mushroom étouffée, cornbread dressing and a pumpkin pie. This menu is available at both the Sacramento and Roseville stores. Order online as late as 48 hours in advance at: holiday.wholefoodsmarket.com.

Meanwhile, less problematic local chain Nugget Markets offers a more traditional spread: mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing, green beans, sweet potatoes and cranberry-orange relish. The protein on offer is Field Roast's Celebration Loaf, a vegan love-or-hate choice. This one is also \$39.99 for two, but dessert is on you. Order online by Friday, Nov. 22, at: nuggetmarket.com/holiday-meals/collection/vegan-holiday-meal.

Supermarket chains aren't your thing? Mother is offering some of its regular menu favorites as a meal for four. Its Chili Verde and Sweet Potato Latkes are top-notch comfort food, and they're offered as part of a package that also includes a kale Caesar salad, collard greens, roasted carrots and rolls. At \$150, it's pricier than those other two options, but ... you've had that Chili Verde, right? Cutoff for ordering is Wednesday, Nov. 20 for pickup

the day before Thanksgiving. Order online at mothersacramento.com/thanksgiving.

If you just need sides or want to cobble together your own pre-made meal, you've got no shortage of options, but here are some of my favorites: Pushkin's offers vegan dinner rolls and apple pie—gluten-free, of course. Place your order at: pushkinsbakery.com/collections/thanksgiving-menu by 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 24. Most of Sellands' Thanksgiving to-go menu is out of the running, but its maple butternut squash and its cranberry sauce are vegan, and the roasted Brussels sprouts can be ordered without bacon. Place your orders at sellands.com/order-online by 3 p.m. Friday, Nov. 22.

Finally, if you're in a bind on the day of, Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op is open from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. It has a ton of pre-made vegan options in its cooler and buffet including stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, rolls, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, sweet potato casserole, vegetable loaf and jackfruit cottage pie. Plus, pumpkin pie by the slice or whole. □

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