

LIFE

Tricks for turkey leftovers

I realize I am getting ahead of myself by talking turkey leftovers right now, but only by a week or so. I trust that you have your Thanksgiving turkey centerpiece under control. This recipe is about that turkey and addresses the leftovers you will face.

I can't imagine a better way to use up those leftovers than to add them to a platter of nachos. Following the sit-down turkey holiday feast, it's refreshing to make food that's decidedly unfancy, unplated and, well, messy. This casual family-style nacho platter will do the trick.

While it appears to be heavy and loaded (it is), these nachos are relatively light and straightforward in ingredients, with just enough cheese to bind them, and a gargantuan mound of mashed avocados to brighten and refresh. I prefer to use dark turkey meat for extra flavor. It's a great way to repurpose the little bits of meat salvaged from the turkey, reserving the larger pieces for the requisite sandwiches the next day.

Turkey Nachos

Active Time: 20 minutes
Total Time: 20 minutes
Yield: Serves 4

Ingredients:
2 ripe avocados
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
1/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1/4 teaspoon Mexican hot sauce
6 ounces tortilla chips



LYNDA BALSLEV FOR TASTEFood

Turkey Nachos

6 to 8 ounces sharp cheddar cheese, coarsely shredded
2 scallions, thinly sliced, white and green parts separated
1/2 medium red bell pepper, finely diced
1 jalapeno pepper, thinly sliced
2 cups shredded turkey meat
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves and tender stems
Freshly ground black pepper
Lime wedges for serving

Steps:
Mash the avocados, lime juice, salt and hot sauce in a bowl until

blended but still slightly chunky. Preheat the oven broiler. Spread half of the chips on a 1/4-sized rimmed baking sheet or a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Scatter about one-third of the cheese over the chips. Top with the remaining chips. Scatter the sliced white scallions, red pepper and jalapeno pepper over the chips, then top with the turkey. Sprinkle the remaining cheese over the pan. Transfer the nachos to the oven and broil about 5 inches below the heating element until the cheese

is melted and the chips are tinged golden brown, about 4 minutes, rotating the pan as needed to ensure even cooking.

Remove from oven and scatter the sliced green scallions and cilantro over the nachos and garnish with black pepper. Serve immediately with the avocado and lime wedges.

Linda Balslev is an award-winning cookbook author, recipe developer, tester and editor. Taste Food is distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication.

Try spicing up your diet with red pepper flakes

Need some help preparing healthy, affordable foods at home to help combat COVID 19? N.C. State University's extension service has great videos. So, wash your hands and start cooking. See <https://home-grown.extension.ncsu.edu/category/in-the-kitchen>.

Q I like the articles about spices and herbs. Tell us about the red pepper flakes. Is there any nutritional benefit?

A First, happy Thanksgiving to all. I hope you will have the opportunity to share in family food traditions of your own or of friends. These times do enrich our lives. It has been fun to share information in this column about ways people use spices and herbs to season their food. I am grateful some of the ECU dietetic students enjoy different tastes than I do and are eager to tell you about them. Rupatun Win, a senior ECU dietetic student, uses red pepper flakes daily. I buy a jar about once a year. But Rupa, who says the flakes are magical, shares the following information.

It doesn't matter if I'm eating some noodle dish at a Thai restaurant or if I'm eating a slice of pizza from a pizzeria, I'm adding red pepper flakes generously. You could say that it's just in my DNA since I'm originally from southeast Asia, where spices are the centerpiece of almost every culture's cuisine.

However, a friend of mine who was born and raised in southeastern North Carolina loves red pepper flakes almost as much as I do. I find this interesting because our taste in food is very different. My favorite dish is a bowl of



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pho, with basil, coriander, bean sprouts and tons of chili oil. Pho, which pronounced "fuh" is a Vietnamese's noodle soup dish with rice noodles and beef or chicken as the main ingredients.

My friend, on the other hand, would be OK with eating country sausage, grits, and eggs for every meal the rest of her life. The country sausage that she enjoys so much also is full of red pepper flakes, and to me is by far the most predominant flavor.

Even though our palates may be wildly different, we both have an affinity for chili peppers. When you think of spicy foods, Asian, Latin American and African cuisines may come to mind, as these cultures are known for their use of spices. However, spicy foods are a staple in numerous cultures across the globe, and some of the most used spices are chili peppers which are often sold as red pepper flakes in the grocery stores.

I believe the reason chili peppers are so popular is not only because of the combination of taste and color, but more importantly because of the nutritional value they offer. More about nutrition later.

The amount of red pepper flakes you consume will vary based on how hot you want your dish to be. I have a tendency of mixing red pepper flakes in most of my dishes and use about 1 tablespoon of red pepper

See **KOLASA, B6**

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Ming Dynasty: A family feast for the holidays

BY CHRISTINA RUOTOLO
Hot Dish

Tomorrow we celebrate Thanksgiving and just a few short weeks later, Christmas. It's the time we gather together, cook together and share not only a meal with family and friends, but continue making holiday memories and sharing traditions.

It reminds me of my childhood family holiday feasts. The table was full of color, flavor, wonder and each meal told a story. But, a few days after the holidays, you could find us at our local Chinese restaurant grazing on a PuPu platter or sharing egg rolls, chicken skewers and other delicious bites. We also celebrated with a full duck served to the table with all the trimmings.

It reminds me of the movie "A Christmas Story." Ralphie's mom was cooking the Christmas Day turkey and dogs ended up destroying it. They went to the only place in town that was open — the local Chinese restaurant. The staff served them an entire duck and sang carols off tune.

If you are looking to start a new tradition or recreate your own Thanksgiving or Christmas day dinner, then you're in luck, because Ming Dynasty can help you recreate this meal with a full



CHRISTINA RUOTOLO/HOT DISH

Peking duck at Ming Dynasty.

Peking duck.

Ming Dynasty has been in business for over 35 years and is located at the Rivergate Shopping Center off of 10th Street beside Ollie's. They specialize in Mandarin, Schezwan and Cantonese dishes. Owner, Mary Yuen along with chef de cuisine Steven Zhou and a courteous staff always ensure you have a memorable experience.

The menu features traditional appetizers like spring rolls, fried rice options, lo mein noodles, beef, pork, chicken, seafood, hibachi items as well as a variety

of chow mein and egg foo young dishes. So let's get this holiday dinner party started.

Before we talk about the duck, let me tell you how the tradition of Peking duck started. The origins date back to the Ming Dynasty, hence the name of the restaurant. This dynasty was in existence about 600 years ago.

Cooks and chefs from all over the land traveled from their home towns to Beijing, China, to cook for the emperor. One of those kitchens and cooks presented the emperor with a Peking duck, which

NOTE

Hot Dish is a wonderful advertising option for restaurants in eastern North Carolina to take part in. They can take part several times a year and bring you a series of Hot Dish articles to showcase different elements of their food service and menu.

Earlier this year, we published parts one and two of a three-part series on Ming Dynasty featuring new Hibachi dishes, updated menu, sharing plates and most recently, their vegetarian menu. To round out the series this year, we will be showcasing family feasts fit for the holidays.

is a complete 5-6 pound duck that has been slow roasted, seasoned with complete trimmings. The Peking duck is prized and popular for its thin, crispy skin.

A few things to note: It does have a long cooking time of over an hour, so you will want to call ahead, preferably a day or two in advance during the holidays to first make sure they have them in stock, and be prepared to wait for a little while for the beautiful dish to slowly roast. This gives you the opportunity to spend time with family, sample appetizers and enjoy a bowl of warming egg drop or wonton soup. It's worth the wait.

The Peking duck is a show-stopper and exquisitely presented with the wings and arms facing up in the center and the thinly sliced meat fanned around the plate. It is paired with sliced spring onions, sliced orange garnish and a dark, rich plum dipping sauce made with hoisin and other spices.

It's also served with house pancakes that are warm and tucked neatly inside a topped chaffing dish. You can't help but feel fancy when food is served on a tray with a top. The way to eat the duck is to place a few slices in the pancake, add a few spring onions, some plum sauce and roll it up.

The slow roasting of the duck yields a tender, juicy inner meat that is dark colored and almost melts in your mouth. Duck is not gamey and does not taste like chicken. It has its own nuances and flavor profile that lends itself to turkey, with its mellow yet satisfying taste and the crispy crust is divine! I love to add a bit of the sliced orange inside my pancake for a tang of citrus. The flavors build upon each other from the tangy sauce and rich, savory meat to a bright hit of onion.

To make this a true feast, make sure to pair it



with one of the fried rice dishes, such as the decadent shrimp fried rice, and a beautiful and healthy assortment of grilled and lightly sauced vegetables including tender mushrooms, Napa cabbage, sweet carrots and snow pea pods, onions, broccoli and zucchini.

This meal was so much fun to eat and to write about, it brought me right back to my family memories. That is the power of food. It feeds your body and soul and Ming Dynasty can help you create new memories anytime of year.

Ming Dynasty offers take-out service daily, a full service bar, as well as dine-in lunch and dinner service. Lunch hours are 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday-Friday and noon to 3 p.m. Sunday. Dinner hours are 4-9:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 4-10 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For more information, or to place your to-go order, call 752-7111. You can also view their entire menu on their website, www.mingdynastygreenville.com.



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