

## Holiday Recipes with a Twist

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Instead of whipping out the old cookbooks this year for those extravagant family dinners you have planned, try some new twists on old favorites to spice up the dinner table.

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This Thanksgiving, fill your dining room table with traditional dishes and accent them with new flavors like citrus and Hatch Chili, and add sausage, tofu and cinnamon to surprise the taste buds of even your most regular holiday dinner guests.

One popular taste this season are butternut squash soups, and each recipe has it's own specialties. The Chef de Cuisine at The Buttes Tempe Resort Marriott, Akos Szabo, has a recipe for delicious butternut squash soup with chicken and apple sausage, wild rice, hatch chili and lime. The unique ingredients are complimented by other rich ingredients like cinnamon, olive oil, heavy cream and maple syrup.

If you're going for a more simple version of butternut squash soup, try a plain recipe with just butternut squash, chicken stock, butter, salt and pepper and crème fraiche. Top this easy soup with black trumpet mushrooms, shallots, chives and diced butternut squash like J&G Steakhouse.

If you have a few vegetarians making an appearance, make a delicious non-traditional steak with sauteed mushrooms- a tofu steak, that is! Sushi Roku makes this special dish with sauteed Hinoichi Blue Tofu, soy, sake and Mirin. Marinate the sauteed tofu until evenly golden brown and serve the tofu in the sake, Mirin and mushroom broth, topped with mushrooms, fried Japanese chili peppers and green onions.

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Try adding lemons, oranges and honey to your favorite hot apple cider, perfect for autumn. Executive Chef Michel Pieton from The Boulders Resort also adds orange juice to the mix and mulling spices to perfect the delicious drink.

To add a little Mexican flare to your holiday meal, prepare Los Sombreros' Tamales de Canela, a sweet cinnamon tamale. Combine lard, salt, baking powder, sugar and canela, and slowly add masa and milk to the mixture. They suggest using canela (Mexican cinnamon) instead of American cinnamon. After the dough is created, simply enclose a ball of the sweet, floury dough between a corn husk and steam for about one hour.

More simply, try adding sausage and other meats to stuffing like Chef Bryan Hulihee at Roaring Fork, or try pumpkin flavoring in waffles and pancakes like US Egg, mix up some Cinnamon Cream Cheese frosting like Sprinkles.

Make sure to create recipes that are popular within your family and friends and incorporate unique flavors you enjoy. Experiment with your old favorites and try some of these ideas, too. A little inspiration from some tasty local restaurants never hurt anyone!