

THE Sungarden TIMES



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November 2025

Welcome to our
community!

*We offer - Assisted Living -
Memory Care - Respite Stays*

Our Staff

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The History of Thanksgiving: From Harvest Feast to a Day of Gratitude

Every November, families across the United States gather around tables filled with turkey, mashed potatoes, and pumpkin pie. It's a moment to pause, share food, laughter, and appreciation — but this cherished holiday began centuries ago as something quite different: a story of survival, community, and shared harvest.

The First Thanksgiving: 1621

The year was 1620 when a group of English settlers known as the Pilgrims set sail aboard the *Mayflower* in search of religious freedom and a new life across the Atlantic. After a harsh 66-day journey, they landed near present-day Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The winter that followed was devastating. Disease, cold, and hunger claimed nearly half of the settlers' lives. As spring arrived, the remaining Pilgrims met members of the Wampanoag Nation, the Indigenous people who had lived on the land for thousands of years. One of them, Tisquantum (Squanto), spoke English — having survived previous encounters with Europeans — and chose to teach the settlers vital skills: how to grow corn, fish local waters, and identify plants that could heal or harm. That autumn, when the Pilgrims reaped a successful harvest for the first time, Governor William Bradford invited the Wampanoag people, including their leader Massasoit, to join in a feast of gratitude. This three-day celebration in the fall of 1621 is often remembered as the "First Thanksgiving." The foods on the table were far from today's typical dishes — there was no pumpkin pie or cranberry sauce, but rather roasted venison, wild fowl, seafood, corn, beans, and squash, the "Three Sisters" crops central to Wampanoag agriculture. It was a moment of shared abundance and cautious friendship.



Thanksgiving Through the Years

While that 1621 feast became symbolic, it wasn't immediately an annual event. Over the following centuries, days of thanksgiving were proclaimed by various colonies and communities at different times — often to mark a military victory, a good harvest, or deliverance from hardship.



One of the earliest national observances came in 1789, when President George Washington declared a national day of thanksgiving to celebrate the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and the nation's blessings. However, it was not yet a fixed annual holiday. The person who helped make Thanksgiving a permanent part of American life was Sarah Josepha Hale, an author and editor best known for writing "Mary Had a Little Lamb." She spent decades campaigning for a national day of gratitude, writing to presidents and publishing editorials about the unifying power of the holiday. Finally, in 1863, during the midst of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln answered her call. Deeply moved by the idea of unity and gratitude, even in a time of division, Lincoln proclaimed a National Day of Thanksgiving, to be observed on the last Thursday of November. He hoped it would bring the country together "to heal the wounds of the nation."

From Lincoln to Today

Thanksgiving remained on the last Thursday of November for decades. But in 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt moved the holiday up by one week to extend the holiday shopping season during the Great Depression. The change caused public confusion — some states celebrated on different Thursdays — so in 1941, Congress officially passed a law declaring Thanksgiving a federal holiday, celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November. Since then, Thanksgiving has continued to evolve. It's a time marked by family gatherings, feasts, parades, and football, but also by quiet reflection and gratitude.

Modern Traditions and Evolving Reflections

Today's Thanksgiving is as much about connection as it is about tradition. Families gather for meals large and small, sharing stories, laughter, and recipes that have been passed down through generations. Classic foods — turkey, stuffing, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie — have become symbols of comfort and togetherness. Across the country, cities host Thanksgiving parades, most famously the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City, featuring giant balloons, marching bands, and holiday cheer. Afterward, many people turn on the television for football games, a tradition that began in the late 19th century. Yet, modern Thanksgiving is also a moment for reflection. Many people acknowledge the complex history between colonists and Indigenous peoples — a story not only of cooperation but also of conflict, displacement, and loss. For some Native American communities, the day is observed as a National Day of Mourning, honoring ancestors and raising awareness of their enduring cultures and struggles.

The Meaning of Thanksgiving Today

While its origins are complicated, Thanksgiving continues to offer a powerful opportunity: to pause, to give thanks, and to come together. It reminds us that gratitude can bridge generations, soften divisions, and nurture compassion. Whether it's expressed through a shared meal, a handwritten note, or a quiet moment of reflection, Thanksgiving's spirit lies in appreciating life's blessings — big and small — and remembering that even in challenging times, there is always something to be thankful for.

Easy Roasted Turkey

Ingredients:

- 1 whole turkey (10–12 lbs), thawed
- 1/4 cup olive oil or melted butter
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp paprika
- Optional: fresh herbs (rosemary, thyme, sage)

Preheat oven to 325°F (165°C)

Remove turkey giblets and pat the turkey dry with paper towels.

Rub olive oil or melted butter all over the turkey.

Sprinkle salt, pepper, garlic powder, and paprika evenly over the turkey.

Optional: Stuff the cavity with fresh herbs for extra flavor.

Place turkey breast-side up on a roasting pan.

Roast uncovered for about 13–15 minutes per pound, or until the internal temperature reaches 165°F (75°C) in the thickest part of the thigh.

Let the turkey rest for 20–30 minutes before carving.



about Our Community..

Sungarden Terrace is an assisted living community that has been open since July of 2000. We strive to offer a wide variety of activities to promote positive experiences through social interaction and success. We pride ourselves on having a “home-like” atmosphere where everyone feels like family, and we are so grateful for all of you.

Meal Times

(may differ on holidays and special events)

Breakfast is served at 8:00am

Lunch is served at 12:00pm

Dinner is served at 5:00pm



Grateful

Saturday, October 4th, was a beautiful morning at Liberty Station as Team Sungarden Terrace proudly represented our residents, families and staff at the “Walk to End Alzheimer’s.” Headed by our Captain Marcos Ramos, Sungarden Terrace was acknowledged by the Alzheimer’s Association as a major sponsor and partner in helping to raise funds for advocacy, support and research to find the cure for this devastating disease. And we have the medal to prove it! The next time you sign in, please admire our medal and plaque on display at the sign-in table.

November is a nostalgic month for many of us. Our clocks “fall back” and we do too, to a place of memories. In this eleventh month of the year we honor our Veterans and regardless of our political beliefs, we all carry a memory associated with the military and a loved one. And then comes Thanksgiving! Each family has its own traditions but I can guarantee they are centered around extended family, too much food, homecomings, football, parades, reminiscing, and acknowledging that we have seriously begun the “holidays.”

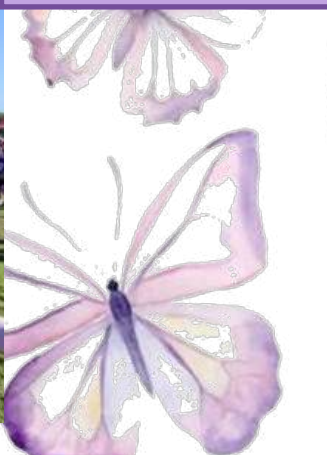
My Thanksgivings have changed as I have aged. Many of the family that once sat at our table are no longer living, and the “youngsters” now have families of their own and look to the future to begin their own traditions. And this is as it should be. Honor your history, enjoy your memories, but be in the present. Be totally aware of the miracle that is happening now. You don’t want to miss it.

Celebrate your Loved One, who lives at Sungarden, and give gratitude for the uniqueness and wisdom that he or she has shared with you through the years. Isn’t that the blessedness of this Thanksgiving holiday?

Abundantly,
Susan



"Today we walk together to honor the loved ones whose memories live on in our hearts. Each step we take brings hope for a future without Alzheimer's and celebrates the strength, love, and courage of families everywhere. We walk for those we have lost, those we cherish, and for the promise of a cure because every memory matters."



If you have any questions or would like to schedule a tour, Please contact Susan O'Shaughnessy at (619) 464 - CARE (2273)
Our Website is Sungardenterrace.com