

# Cook the Book, Thanksgiving Special: Sam Sifton and Epicurious

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**Thanksgiving** is just around the corner. Chances are you've already been scouring cookbooks and food blogs for the best recipes and advice for preparing a bang-up feast next Thursday. Recipes abound for anything Thanksgiving-related but there are few Thanksgiving-dedicated cookbooks out there.

This fall, however, marked the release of a book for the totally Thanksgiving-obsessed (and who isn't?): [Sam Sifton's \*Thanksgiving: How to Cook it Well\*](#) . After spending years answering the [Thanksgiving help line](#) over at [The New York Times](#) , the former dining critic has compiled a treatise devoted to a traditional version of the holiday meal.

There are no salads on Sifton's table, nor is there garlic (roasted or otherwise) in his mashed potatoes. He likes to roast his bird with butter, slowly, basting it as our parents taught us, and he sets the table in a formal arrangement with spaces even for dessert forks. Sifton presents a vision of Thanksgiving strictly tied to family and cultural tradition; his Thanksgiving is a quintessential one.

And yet, after reading the slim book and poring through the recipes, such an elegant meal seems possible, if not downright easy. Further, given the humorously opinionated tone of the book, it makes for a fun weekend read.

Perhaps, however, you want to reinvigorate your Thanksgiving table with bolder takes on tradition. [The Epicurious Cookbook](#) offers a bevy of Thanksgiving recipes filed away in its section on fall recipes. Offering a mix of star-

studded celebrity chef recipes, member contributions, and recipes penned by the editors at **Epicurious** , The Epicurious Cookbook makes for an excellent addition to the advice written in Sifton's book as well as around the web.

This week, we'll be cooking Thanksgiving dinner from both books. We'll roast **Tom Colicchio's Herb-Butter Turkey** and bake off **New England Sausage, Apple and Dried Cranberry Stuffing** from *The Epicurious Cookbook* . Then we'll dive into side dishes courtesy of Sam Sifton. First we'll roast **Cauliflower with Anchovy Bread Crumbs** and then simmer a pot of **Basic Cranberry Sauce** straight out of [his book](#) . Finally, we'll prepare two dishes written by Sifton exclusively for Serious Eats readers: **Braised Collard Greens** and **Creamed Onions**.

## Win 'Thanksgiving: How to Cook it Well' and 'The Epicurious Cookbook'

Thanks to the gracious folks at Random House and Clarkson Potter, we have five copies (each) of *Thanksgiving: How to Cook it Well* and *The Epicurious Cookbook* this week. All you need to do to win is to tell us about your greatest Thanksgiving success or most dramatic flop in the comments section below. Winners will be randomly selected to receive either book.