

## **Thanksgiving Poll: Traditions We Love and Those We Could Do Without**

### **Traditions You'd Rather Do Without**

One respondent talked about the difficulty of “The back and forth on who will come...blended family and it can be difficult at times.” Another wished their tradition didn't always involve “going to a specific house. I would rather take turns and have other family members host.”

One person said that “As our family has shrunk over the years (as folks pass away) we've whittled away all those traditions we didn't enjoy; the inevitable snippy conversations between relatives who don't like each other, the need to have a big fancy meal that no one can eat even a quarter of, the mashed potatoes and gravy made with NO SALT for the grandfather with high blood pressure (so we all had to suffer). We go to Golden Corral so everyone can eat what they want and we people-watch.”

### **What to Watch – Is Anyone ‘Forced’ to Watch Something?**

Responses included, if a game is on “that is the option for everyone.”

“Football rules the living room and that's also the main gathering room, open to the kitchen and dining room. So if you're in the house, you're either watching it or forced to listen to it.”

“Football... hours and hours of football.”

“No one is "forced" to watch anything. But the TV only has the football games.”

“If you're in the room with the game on, no non-essential or unrelated chatter/conversation (it's like a bingo-hall, shhh unless you're commenting on the game).”

“Anyone who wants to watch something other than football.”

“Football is either on or the TV is off.”

“It's the game or nothing,”

“If it's not pre-game banter, football stats, the game or the post-game, it's not going on the tv.”

“We did a Harry Potter Thanksgiving once - but we still watched the Lions.”

The Lions were specifically mentioned a lot but Dallas also appeared in the comments, “Cowboys [game] is a must. No exceptions.”

For one family, “Whoever gets the remote first controls our viewing pleasure. If you snooze you lose, so yes there is a possibility you won't get to watch what you would like to.”

A few mentioned the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. “EVERYONE is forced to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade with me!” “The parade...we are all forced to watch because of

my sister-in-law. I can't stand watching parades.” And one very adamant, “MACY DAY PARADE W GRANDMA.”

### **Things You Thought Everyone Did – What have you found out is unique to your family?**

One person cited “The sheer volume of desserts,” while another noted “The way that the stuffing is made can really vary,” while another wrote, “For some reason people feel like apples and nuts should be in stuffing - they should not be in stuffing.”

Others said, “My husband's family doesn't eat all day and I find that strange... they just have a meal and that's that. My family eats ALL day.”

“We don't have 7 courses. We don't serve turkey plus ham. We actually like cranberry relish and our gravy is homemade, not from a jar. At our house, the pie is SECONDARY to the Cool Whip, and if there's no Cool Whip, no one's eating pie... and someone's probably getting disowned.”

Many shared about their non-food traditions and remembrances. “My grandmother's birthday was around Thanksgiving. Even though she died 13 years ago, we still call it her birthday party. At least, when we can have it.” “My in-laws gathering used to be 50+ people. And we'd have an uncle do a magic show in between dinner and Leftover dinner.” “Saying grace before meals and doing a gingerbread house after dinner.” “Our feast was an open buffet style; my in-laws keep extending the table to have a sit down with EVERYONE, and attempt a group conversation with 40 people.” “Only men sit at the head table, but the men have to wash all the dishes and handle all the leftovers.”

“We have a small tree in the dining room with a basket of wood slices on twine and a sharpie, and everyone must write on their wooden piece what they are thankful for and hang it on the tree.” “I made up the tradition of doing leaf stencils and each of us gets one per family member. We write on the leaf what we're grateful for related to that particular person.”

### **Traditions You'd Like to Change**

There were several suggestions related to food – lambchops or chicken instead of turkey, more ethnic dishes, different types of dressing. Two people mentioned white table cloths, one having family members sign it, and adding to it as the family grows, and another wrote, “I like the idea of reusing a write-on tablecloth from year to year and adding blessings each year.” Another wrote, “I'd like to start making tamales in advance of the holiday, to give as gifts to loved ones when we arrive.”

Wanting to change or re-balance the workload for preparations, cooking, and clean up was another reoccurring theme. “Going out to dinner so I don't have a mess to clean after my husband cooks!” “Everyone splitting into those that prep and those that clean not same people for both.”

Most people said they wanted more guests and more time together, fewer people staring at screens and more personal conversations including the person wanted to get rid of, “the table - I would prefer a buffet and everyone sit wherever they want, and have conversations all over the house happening at once.