

Pandemic Thanksgiving

Almost every Thanksgiving, since I've been married, we have had people over to our house, or been involved in some sort of military gathering that involved me making two or three turkeys and sides. This year, Thanksgiving was just myself, my husband and the kid. Roasting a twelve-pound turkey seemed a bit... excessive. Making mashed potatoes, gravy, yams and baking pies were all above "my pay grade", between my schoolwork, trying to keep the kid's education on track and having my husband working from home. I just couldn't do it. I felt overwhelmed.

On the upside to all of this, one of the local markets had on sale, early in the fall, six pound turkeys. About the size of large chickens. Really large chickens. And I had bought three of them, because frankly, I'm a sucker for turkey sandwiches.

A bird this small, it's easy to spatchcock (take out the backbone and flatten). Doing this means that the bird will cook faster, and ALL the skin gets crispy (YUM!). Mashed potatoes? Out of a box! Gravy? Packet, made with chicken stock in a box instead of water. Pies? From the grocery store bakery! One thing that I did do from scratch was the veggies - sauteed carrots and roasted brussels sprouts and I had to have my cranberry relish. For just the three of us, it was perfect. With just the right amount of food on the table and leftovers.

It wasn't the same, though. There were holes at the table. Faces missing. It was hard not having my girls and my grandkids there. But there is always next year.