

VALLEY RESTAURANTS SERVE UP THANKSGIVING

Our local restaurants offer tasty alternatives to cooking on Turkey Day.

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Hugo's vegetarian holiday feast features red lentil loaf instead of turkey.

COURTESY OF HUGO'S

While you may have to make excuses to Aunt Tillie and Uncle Ed from Illinois, you don't have to persuade The Sauce that it's OK to let someone else wear the apron for Thanksgiving dinner. Be thankful for the long list of Valley restaurants that cater to both traditional and nontraditional tastes (we can't help but notice that Granada Hills' [Odyssey](#) restaurant offers turducken as a choice). Below we list just a handful—a little early so you'll have time to make your reservations or search out your own perfect Thanksgiving restaurant.

Vegetarian-vegan (takeout/catering only): [Hugo's Restaurant Studio City](#) offers a full list of omnivore treats, but the Happy Holiday Feast (feeds six) can be built around red lentil loaf, vegetable-cornbread stuffing and mushroom gravy,

among other veggie goodies. The feast is gluten-free and can be made vegan. **12851 Riverside Drive, 818-761-8985**

Raw: Studio City's popular **Sun Café** will offer two take-away boxes on Thanksgiving Day: one raw and one cooked vegan. They should be open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., but since plans are still gelling best to check by phone before arriving. **10820 Ventura Blvd., 818-927-4100**

Surf and Turf Thanksgiving: Just because you're not a vegetarian doesn't necessarily mean you want to eat a Big Bird. **Mastro's Steak House in Thousand Oaks**—open on Thanksgiving for the first time ever—wants to tempt you with steak and seafood, including this lovely seafood tower (other California locations include Beverly Hills, Costa Mesa, Malibu and Newport Beach). **2087 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., 805-418-1811**

Mastro's seafood tower

Italian: You can probably find ethnic Thanksgivings of all persuasions in the LA area, but if you're up for Italian, try **Maggiano's Little Italy** in Woodland Hills. Dinner includes traditional American main courses (roast turkey, ham or tilapia), but start your meal with bruschetta and choose two hearty pasta dishes on the side. Some desserts and sides also show an Italian flair: focaccia sausage stuffing, chocolate zuccotto cake and tiramisu. **6100 Topanga Blvd., 818-887-3777**

Newbie: **North Hollywood's The Front Yard at the Garland**, opened this summer, celebrates its first Thanksgiving with Chef Chris Turano's seasonal interpretation. Along with turkey, enjoy shaved brussels sprouts with apples, grapes, walnuts, celery and sour cream dressing, roasted local fall vegetables and pumpkin squares with allspice whipped cream. **4222 Vineland Ave., 818-255-7920**

Traditional: You can't get much more classic than rustic **Saddle Peak Lodge** in Calabasas. Unusual menu items include seared New Zealand elk tenderloin, and for dessert, try the chocolate buckwheat brownie or banana-huckleberry bread pudding. **419 Cold Canyon Rd., 818-222-3888**

Another frequent critic's choice for elegant Thanksgiving dining: Studio City's **The Bistro Garden**—featuring live piano music on the holiday. **12950 Ventura Blvd., 818-501-0202**