

# Heavenly going all out with Thanksgiving feast

By Kathryn Reed

One ingredient not on most Thanksgiving menus is fresh powder. With Mother Nature looking like she will be delivering an ample serving of the white stuff this week to Lake Tahoe ski resorts, it might be a tough choice for some people – powder day or being in the kitchen all day.

The chefs at Heavenly Mountain Resort have 2,200 pounds of turkey ready to cook on Thursday so you don't have to.

This is the first year the resort will prepare a traditional Thanksgiving dinner for guests. In the past the meal was reserved for employees working that day. (They will still get to eat for free this Thanksgiving.)



Chef Pete Brinckerhoff is responsible for Heavenly's

## Thanksgiving menu. Photo/Heavenly Mountain Resort

Pete Brinckerhoff is new to the Heavenly team, coming from the Riva Grill-Caliente group in the basin. He will be the one with the chef's hat on at Tamarack Lodge. Claude Goode is the executive chef who roams between the various food outlets on the mountain. Steve Turner is the bigwig overseeing all of the food and beverage operations at the resort.

"We have listened to our guests and were adding more for the restrictive diets," Turner told *Lake Tahoe News*. "On the Thanksgiving holiday we get a great crowd from the Bay Area, scenic riders, different ethnic groups. And they want more vegetarian options."



### **The Thanksgiving menu at Heavenly:**

- Slow roasted Tom turkey
- Mashed potatoes (lacto vegetarian)
- Turkey gravy
- Sautéed green beans (vegan)
- Cornbread stuffing with sun dried cranberries and candied Walnuts (vegan, contains wheat)

- Sweet potato pie with Oreo crust and marshmallow topping (lacto vegetarian)
- Cranberry dressing (vegan)
- Pumpkin Pie with whipped cream (lacto vegetarian)
- Vegetarian option – Heavenly Crispy Thanksgiving Tofu

While burgers are the No. 1 seller no matter the day, the culinary team has done its research to know how much food to have for the holiday. They factor in weather, hotels share occupancy numbers, and historical numbers all play a part in knowing just how much of each side to prepare.

The dinner will be served starting at 10:30am at all of the lodges that are open. For sure this means Tamarack. East Peak is a possibility. With the resort not opening until Wednesday, not all of the decisions have been finalized – including the cost of this special meal.

Mixologists are coming up with specialty drinks for the occasion – maybe something with Wild Turkey.

“Chef Claud knows one of my pet peeves is to not run out of food,” Turner said.

This means there’s a good chance that those who don’t make it to Heavenly on Thanksgiving could get some leftovers the next day.

“I love the turkey sandwich the next day,” Brinckerhoff told *Lake Tahoe News*. But he added, “The way we are cooking there probably won’t be a lot of leftovers.”

This is because the 25-pound turkeys are being cut apart and cooked separately instead of as a whole bird. This dramatically speeds up the cooking time, while also allowing for food to be coming out of the oven more frequently instead

of hours apart. Plus, it's a way to cut down on having a lot of extras.

"With the Tamarack Lodge we have the latest, greatest equipment. We have chill blasters so it would be like fresh again the next day. It's not held in a warmer," Goode said.

At Tamarack there is also a CVap oven. It's cooking with steam, which helps food stay moister.

East Peak's kitchen isn't conducive to preparing the whole Thanksgiving meal so it will be transported there from Tamarack.

Brinckerhoff has been tasked with coming up with the menu – which is fairly traditional.

"One of the unique sides I've done in the past is a family recipe. My grandmother used to make a sweet potato casserole with marshmallows on top. It was one of my favorites," Brinckerhoff said. "I did a twist on that by putting in an Oreo crust, then the sweet potato, and marshmallow on top."

Brinckerhoff is sharing the recipe with *Lake Tahoe News* readers:

### **Brinckerhoff Family's Sweet Potato Pie**

5 pounds sweet potatoes

1 pound butter

3 C Oreo crumbles

1 bag marshmallows

1 tsp cinnamon

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp nutmeg

#### **The crust**

Soften a quarter pound of the butter to 80 degrees. Place the butter and cookie crumbs in a mixing bowl and mix until the cookie crumbs holds together when compressed.

Place the cookie crust evenly in the bottom of a 9 x 9 baking dish. Make sure the crust is spread evenly.

### **Sweet Potato Pie**

Peel the sweet potatoes and cut them into large chunks. Place the sweet potatoes in a large pot of water. Put the pot over high heat and cook until soft.

Remove the potatoes from the water and place in a large mixing bowl. Add the cinnamon, nutmeg and the rest of the butter. Mash the sweet potatoes until smooth, do not over whip.

Place the mashed sweet potatoes on top of the cookie crust. Spread the potato evenly, then top with the marshmallows

Bake the sweet potato pie until the marshmallows are golden brown.