

Let's Eat!

THANKSGIVING EDITION

THE FAMILY
THAT

Cooks Together

Two generations
of a food-obsessed
family collaborate
on a cookbook—
and aim to tell the
world just how
easy a homemade
meal can be.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY

WILLIAM
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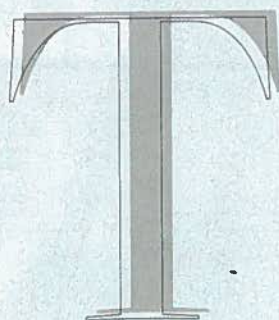
TEXT BY

KATIE ARNOLD-
RATLIFF

WINE AND DINE
The Pollan women—
(from left) Dana,
Tracy, Corky, and
Lori—chop it up in
Tracy's Manhattan
kitchen.

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HIS ELEGANT MANHATTAN APARTMENT—its tall ceilings, bisque walls hung with grand oil paintings, and windows overlooking the thrilling green of Central Park—is full of warm, familiar sounds, like bare feet on wood floors and knives drumming against cutting boards and the snapping pops of delicious fried things becoming delicious fried things. But the *smell* in here, a combination of roast turkey, olive oil, fresh herbs, and caramelized sugar, is the place's most extraordinary feature by far. Follow it through the front

door and you'll find yourself in the kitchen, where food magazines are stuffed in every nook, the cupboards contain everything from corkscrew pasta to coriander, and four women who look remarkably alike are making Thanksgiving dinner.

Well, sort of. Today the women of the Pollan family—Corky, the matriarch, and daughters Dana, Lori, and Tracy—have assembled to fine-tune the Turkey Day menu, using Tracy's apartment (which she shares with her husband, the actor Michael J. Fox, and their four children) as a laboratory. Perfecting the meal is no small matter—this is a family that takes its culinary cred seriously. Corky, a former shopping columnist at *New York* magazine and onetime style director of *Gourmet*, is an accomplished cook.

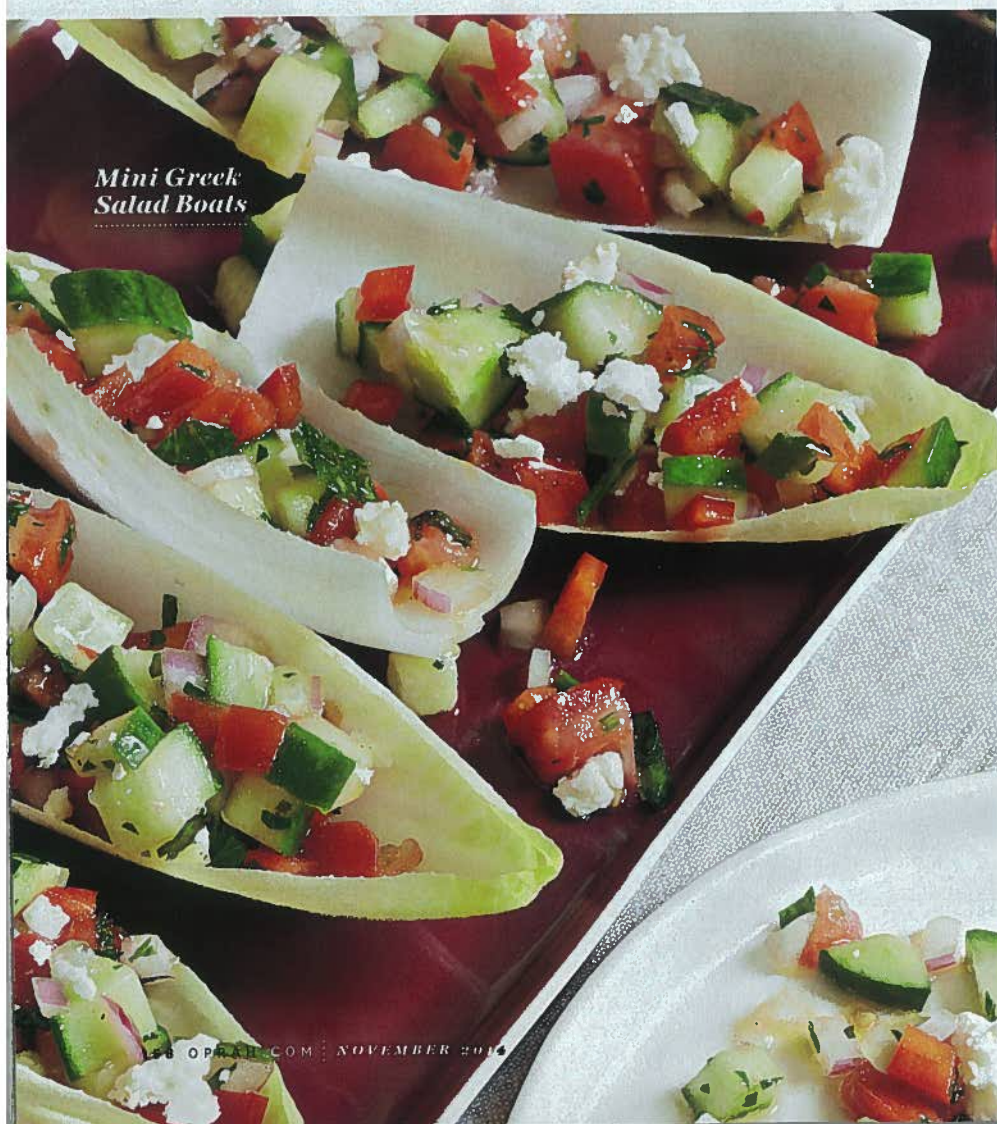
All three Pollan sisters have followed in her footsteps, and their brother, food writer Michael Pollan, is, well, food writer Michael Pollan, the author of *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (perhaps best known for coining the essential eating advice "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants.").

But he's not the most recent author in the clan. The new cookbook *The Pollan Family Table* was a joint effort undertaken by Corky and her three daughters, who felt it was high time they collected their go-to recipes in one volume. "We said to one another, 'Wouldn't it be great to gather all the recipes we love?'" Dana says as she folds cubes of Granny Smith apple into cinnamon-flecked cake batter.

They weren't the only ones with an interest in the project. "We all had friends asking us, 'What's that great thing you make?'" Tracy says, grating sweet potatoes on the kitchen island. "And it became a running joke. People would say, 'Just write a cookbook so we don't have to ask all the time.'"

The art of cooking for one's family is slowly getting lost, the sisters believe. The culprit? A misunderstanding that it's just too complicated. "I know people who say, 'I can't cook. You don't know my schedule!'" Lori says. "But our philosophy is that something is better than nothing. If you eliminate just one processed food from your dinner, right there the quality of your diet has gone up." The Pollans' cookbook makes simple switches even simpler, with recipes for staples such as salad dressing and tomato sauce, which are almost as easy to make as they are to buy.

Of course, the benefits of a home-cooked meal extend beyond nutrition—as the Pollan sisters, who have ten children between them, know firsthand. "We ate dinner together every night as kids," Lori continues. "It was the highlight of the day. Mom was always trying new things. Our



Mini Greek Salad Boats



COLLECTIVE SPIRIT

The ladies' new cookbook, *The Pollan Family Table*, features time-honored recipes beloved by the entire clan, plus easy, healthy takes on an array of classic dishes.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: STYLIST: CANNON FOR JUDY CASEY INC.; TRACY AND LORI: HAIR: MARK ANTHONY USING JULIEN FABEL HAIR CARE FOR JUDY CASEY INC.; MAKEUP: NICK BAROSE FOR EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS USING MAKE UP FOR EVER; CORKY AND DANA: HAIR: MITCH BARRY AT BRYAN SANTRY AGENCY; MAKEUP: QUINN MURPHY FOR LANCÔME AT ART DEPARTMENT; CLOTHING CREDITS: DANA: TOP: TORY BURCH; PANTS: RAG AND BONE; TRACY: TOP, CULLEN; LORI: TOP, REISS; PANTS, RAG AND BONE.

FOOD STYLIST: CARRIE PURCELL AT BIG LEO. PROP STYLIST: CINDY DIPRIMA WITH EHMANAGEMENT.COM.

"We said to one another, 'Wouldn't it be great to gather all the recipes we love?'" says Dana.

***Creamed
Spinach Gratin***

***Sweet-Potato
Pancakes***

***Turnip and
Pear Puree***

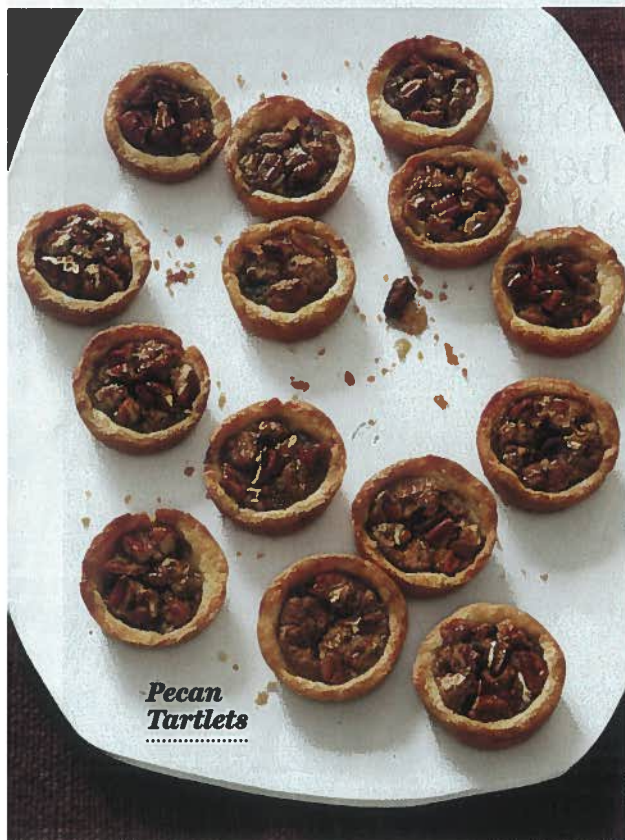


ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

For the Pollan family's super-easy recipe for roasted Brussels sprouts with cranberries and pine nuts, download the O app on your tablet.

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**Pecan
Turtlets**



**Streusel-
Topped
Apple Cake**

“My mother does one turkey. My brother gets an heirloom one,” Tracy says. “It’s like the grand tasting of the birds.”

friends would come for dinner and exclaim over her artichokes, which they had never seen before.”

“Nobody else was making artichokes at home in the ‘70s!” Tracy says. “Or Mexican food, Indian food, or Italian food.”

“She made it look effortless,” Dana says.

Cooking for your family may be simpler than you think, but choosing what to make every night can be a challenge—though being part of a clan as tightly knit as this one does help. The Pollan women, all but one of whom live within walking distance of one another, have quite the culinary phone tree going on.

“We’re constantly calling each other up to ask, ‘What are you doing for dinner tonight? I don’t know what to make. I can’t even think!’” Lori says. She peeks into the oven to see how the pecan tartlets are coming along.

This crowdsourcing strategy makes sense, considering that each member of the family has her own specialty. Dana is known for unfussy cooking, Lori for vegetables. Corky is the queen of sweets.

“I do more desserts than the girls do,” she says. “That didn’t used to be true, but now I have grandkids.” Corky spoons cucumber, red bell pepper, and feta into little endive boats for an inventive take on Greek salad, transforming it into a two-bite (and very tasty) hors d’oeuvre.

“It sounds funny,” Tracy says, “but I’m known for my sandwiches.” Sandwiches?

“Yeah!” she says. “They’re crazy intricate—all kinds of combinations of herbs and dressings. The downside is that now everybody wants me to make their sandwiches for them.”

Sandwich skills will come in handy at Thanksgiving because the Pollans make a ton of food, and like any sane American family, they know the best way to enjoy leftovers is between two slices of bread.

“We divide and conquer at Thanksgiving,” Tracy says. “My mom does one turkey. My brother gets an heirloom one from a farm. They each do their own gravy. It’s like the grand tasting of the birds.”

“There are certain classics”—such as the family’s beloved garlic mashed potatoes—“but we always try new sides and desserts.”

This year the menu has come together nicely: the endive boats, a savory-sweet turnip and pear puree, sweet-potato pancakes, spinach gratin, and the apple cake with crumbly brown-sugar topping. (The pecan tartlets are on the holiday table every year, but the Pollan women whipped them up anyway—they were just in the mood.) The ladies look around at their spread and marvel: Thanksgiving is good to go. All that’s left to do is gather in the breakfast nook, have a chat, and, of course, dig in.

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Mini Greek Salad Boats

- 2 cups diced tomato
- 1½ cups diced English cucumber
- 1 cup diced red bell pepper
- ½ cup minced red onion
- ¼ cup chopped fresh mint
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- ¾ cup crumbled feta (about 2¾ ounces)
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. ground black pepper
- 4 heads Belgian endive, separated into spears

In a medium bowl, combine tomato, cucumber, bell pepper, onion, mint, parsley, olive oil, vinegar, feta, salt, and black pepper. Spoon mixture onto endive spears, arrange on a platter, and serve.

Makes about 36 hors d'oeuvres. Total time: 25 minutes.

Sweet-Potato Pancakes

- 1½ pounds sweet potatoes, peeled
- 1 medium onion
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 tsp. ground black pepper, divided
- Olive oil, for frying

1. In a food processor fitted with a grating disk, shred sweet potatoes and onion. Transfer to a large bowl. Stir in eggs, flour, 1 tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. black pepper.

2. Line a rimmed baking sheet with paper towels and place near stove. In a large nonstick skillet, heat ¼ cup olive oil on medium-high heat until shimmering. Form each pancake using 2 rounded Tbsp. sweet-potato mixture. Cook 5 or 6 pancakes at a time until browned and crisp, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer to prepared baking sheet. Repeat, making sure to stir sweet-potato mixture before forming each batch, using more oil as needed.

3. Transfer pancakes to a second rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle on remaining ½ tsp. each salt and black pepper and reheat in a 375° oven, about 8 minutes. Arrange pancakes on a platter and serve.

Makes 12 servings.

Active time: 50 minutes.

Total time: 1 hour 15 minutes.

Turnip and Pear Puree

- 1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. salt, divided
- 3 rutabagas (about 4½ pounds), peeled and cut into 1" pieces
- 4 large Bosc pears (about 2 pounds), peeled, cored, and cut into 1" pieces
- ¼ cup orange marmalade
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add 1 Tbsp. salt and rutabaga and simmer over medium heat until barely tender, about 20 minutes. Add pear and simmer until very tender, about 25 minutes longer. Drain rutabaga and pear in a colander and add back to pot. Shake them in pot over medium-high heat to dry, about 3 minutes.

2. Preheat oven to 350°. In a food processor fitted with a metal blade, work in batches to puree rutabaga, pear, marmalade, ginger, cinnamon, black pepper, and remaining 1 tsp. salt until smooth. Scrape mixture into a large oven-safe casserole. Bake 40 minutes and serve.

Makes 12 servings.

Active time: 20 minutes.

Total time: 1 hour 50 minutes.

Creamed Spinach Gratin

- 7 (10-ounce) packages frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- 6½ Tbsp. unsalted butter, divided, plus more for greasing pan
- 1 cup plain bread crumbs
- 1½ tsp. plus a pinch of kosher salt, divided
- ½ tsp. plus a pinch of ground black pepper, divided
- 3 cups finely chopped onion
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 3 cups milk
- 1½ cups half-and-half
- ½ tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1½ cups finely grated Parmesan (4½ ounces), divided
- 1¼ cups shredded Gruyère (3½ ounces)

1. Put spinach in a colander and squeeze out excess water. Set aside.

2. Preheat oven to 375°. Butter a 12" x 14" baking dish. In a large, heavy pot, melt 1½ Tbsp. butter over medium heat. Add bread crumbs and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Season with a pinch each of salt and

pepper and transfer to a small bowl.

3. Wipe out pot and add remaining 5 Tbsp. butter. When butter is melted, add onion and garlic and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 8 minutes. Stir in flour until well blended. Slowly add milk and half-and-half. Cook, whisking often, until mixture simmers and thickens slightly, about 8 minutes. Add nutmeg and remaining 1½ tsp. salt and ½ tsp. pepper. Add reserved spinach and ¾ cup Parmesan and blend well.

4. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish and sprinkle with remaining ¾ cup Parmesan. Scatter Gruyère and reserved bread crumbs over top and bake until browned and bubbling, about 25 minutes. Let rest 5 minutes and serve.

Makes 12 servings.

Active time: 25 minutes.

Total time: 1 hour 10 minutes.

Pecan Turtlets

- ½ cup cream cheese at room temperature
- ½ cup (1 stick) plus 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter, at room temperature, divided
- 1 cup sifted all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup dark brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- Pinch of kosher salt
- ⅔ cup chopped pecans

1. In a large bowl, combine cream cheese and ½ cup butter and mix well with a wooden spoon. Add flour and mix well. Flatten dough into a disk, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate 1 hour.

2. In a large bowl, combine brown sugar, egg, remaining 1 Tbsp. butter, vanilla, and salt. Using a handheld electric mixer, beat until smooth, about 1 minute.

3. Divide dough into 24 (1") balls. In a 24-cup mini muffin pan, place a ball in each cup. Using your thumb, press dough to line bottom and sides of cups. Evenly distribute half the pecans in cups. Add 1 rounded tsp. filling to each and top with remaining pecans. Bake until filling is set and crust is browned, about 30 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Makes 24 tarts.

Active time: 30 minutes.

Total time: 1 hour.

Streusel-Topped Apple Cake

TOPPING

- 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter, chilled, cut into small pieces, plus more for greasing pan
- ½ cup dark brown sugar
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon

CAKE

- 5 Granny Smith apples, 3 peeled, cored, and cut into ¼" dice (about 3¾ cup) and 2 peeled, cored, and cut into ¼"-thick half-moons
- 2 cups plus 1 Tbsp. granulated sugar, divided
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 4 cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- ½ cup milk, at room temperature

1. Butter a 10" springform pan. Preheat oven to 350°. Make the topping: In a medium bowl, mix all ingredients with fingers until butter is pea size. Set aside.

2. Make the cake: In a large bowl, mix diced apples with 1 Tbsp. granulated sugar and cinnamon. In another large bowl, whisk flour with baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Set both bowls aside.

3. In the bowl of a standing mixer using the paddle attachment, cream butter with remaining 2 cups granulated sugar until light and fluffy, 3 minutes. Beat in eggs, one at a time, blending well. On slow speed, add reserved flour mixture alternating with milk, scraping down sides periodically. Mix until just combined. Fold in reserved apple mixture.

4. Transfer batter into prepared pan. Arrange sliced apples, slightly overlapping, in two circles on top. Scatter reserved topping over apples. Bake until a cake tester comes out clean with a few crumbs, about 1½ hours. Transfer to a rack to cool 20 minutes, then remove ring. Let cool to room temperature and serve.

Makes 12 servings.

Active time: 40 minutes.

Total time: 2 hours 30 minutes. 1