

OPINION

Best Thanksgiving Food

BY PEYTON BARRETT

THE ASSORTMENT OF DIFFERENT, aromatic foods is a sign that Thanksgiving is here. Turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, corn, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin pie are all a part of the realm of different smells that come from the dinner table, and it is so hard to resist all of those delightful smells.

Out of all of them, stuffing is my absolute favorite. Between the texture and the taste, stuffing is, by far, the best food for so many reasons. It can be both salty and/or sweet, and there are so many different, unique ways to make stuffing to tailor it to a certain liking. It is tradition in our family to try a one new recipe every year, as well as make the favorites that our family has had for a very long time. It is sort of our way of bringing in the old and new in our favorite Thanksgiving food.

To narrow down the best food option to one choice was very difficult, but I asked my friends around me, my boyfriend, and his family for some advice. Some said turkey, others said mashed potatoes, but the overall verdict was stuffing. Every family has their own way of making it. Part of the reason that stuffing is the best Thanksgiving food is that it is such a comfort food that can be remembered from many generations back. It is warm and salty, sometimes with a little bit of sweetness added to it, and it is the absolute best when it is fresh out of the oven and smothered in deliciously creamy gravy. It is just such a great family comfort food.

Stuffing is just one of those must-have Thanksgiving foods, and it is one of the first things I think of when I think of Thanksgiving (other than spending time with family to just be thankful). It creates bonds with people that we normally wouldn't think to talk to, and it makes a place that isn't home help to feel like home. What is the food that gets your mouth drooling in anticipation for Thanksgiving? †



**ORDER ONLINE AT
TOPPERS.COM**

1154 GRAND AVENUE, ST. PAUL
PHONE: 651-221-9000
SUN-THURS 11:00AM-3AM
FRI-SAT 11:00AM-3:30AM

Finals Week Self-Care for Dummies

KELLY PIERCE

ARE YOU ready for finals week? Well, I have news for you. Regardless of whether you are or aren't, finals hits everyone the same. Just like an x-ray reveals the commonality of human anatomy, finals penetrates deep into the human soul and brings out the anxiety, procrastination, and caffeine addiction in all of us.

Finals week is terrible and there's no way around it. The campus library in mid-December is filled with anxious students starving themselves to study a bit longer and erupting into random bouts of sobbing. Finals week should be recognized as a public health crisis. In previous semesters I've drunk so much coffee that my insides tingle, and I'm pretty sure I'm in the early stages of macular degeneration from excessive blue-light exposure.

This year, instead of pushing your body and mind to their absolute limits, take care of yourself. Stress makes you irritable. After a long day of studying, wouldn't it be nice to come home at a reasonable hour to relax and rejuvenate with your significant other instead of fighting over the plate in the sink that totally isn't yours?

Finals week sucks, but it doesn't have to. Here are four tried and true, research-backed, and (mostly) idiot-proof ways to totally kill it during finals week:

1) Maintain good sleep hygiene

Our bodies have a natural biological clock called a circadian rhythm. I'll spare you the science behind this one, but basically, your brain works best when you fall asleep and wake up at the same time every day. Establishing a relaxing bedtime routine can help prepare your body for sleep. In the morning, get up as soon as your alarm goes off and make your bed - this is actually a huge life hack. The tiny surge of dopamine you get from accomplishing a task first thing in the morning primes you to be more productive throughout the day.

2) Study smart

Study material in chunks and take breaks. Though it might seem like a good idea to force yourself to study for hours on end, you'll actually retain less information than if you take breaks.

The human brain can only focus for a maximum of one hour before it needs to rest. Try studying for 45-60 minutes, then taking a 15-20 minute break. During your break, resist the urge to check social media. Instead, take a walk, connect with your friends, or have a shower.

Phones are huge productivity drainers. Research says when you're trying to focus, getting a smartphone notification distracts you for up to 15 seconds (and that's if you don't pick up the phone). While studying, turn it off and put it in your backpack. Becky will be fine if you don't respond to her text about Chad's luscious blonde hair and muscular abs for 15 minutes.

3) Be a master planner

Finals week is hard, but you do have one advantage: you know it's coming and you know what you'll be tested on. Two weeks before finals, make a comprehensive list of all the material you must study. Then, create a schedule. Don't just work on one class all day, either - study specific sections for each course throughout the day. This will prevent boredom (to a certain degree) and help you retain more information.

Write it down! Don't just map it out in your head. Make a physical schedule, stick to it, and cross things off as you do them. Remember that life-hack about making your bed and dopamine boosts? Same idea here.

4) RELAX!

Don't forget to schedule time for yourself. You need to spend time every day recharging your batteries and enjoying your life. If you're too stressed, you won't study well or perform well. Taking time to relax is probably just as important as studying. Just don't sit on the couch all day and tell your roommates you're priming your brain for test day - that's not a thing.

As college students, finals week ignores our differences and reveals the innocent, scared, perturbed infant in all of us. This semester, don't be a baby. Get to sleep on time, study smart, plan ahead, and take a chill pill. Five years from now, you'll have to deal with taxes, 401k's, pensions, and other equally abhorrent adult stuff.

Finals suck, but college is awesome. By using these four tips, you'll totally crush finals like a boss. Then, hit the bar for celebratory drinks with your homies, make some questionable decisions, and sleep through all of winter break. These are some of the best years of our lives - don't let finals get in the way. †