



# HOME *for the* HOLIDAYS

Mo'Nique celebrates the season with family traditions of beloved foods, soulful flavors and lots of warm hospitality

Of all the holidays, Thanksgiving is probably my favorite. My hectic stand-up comedy schedule typically has me on the road most of the year, so I look forward to slowing down and being home with my family, especially now that I have little ones. [The twins make a total of four sons.] It's a time to reflect on the year and to give thanks for my many blessings.

Thanksgiving is when I get to enjoy all my favorite foods. In addition to traditional fare such as roast turkey, corn bread dressing, yams and macaroni and cheese, there are family favorites like corn pudding, braised rabbit, stewed oxtails and even pigtales. Our holiday table isn't complete without Mom's signature Orange Roughy With Crabmeat, which always takes center stage. (We're from Baltimore, the nation's crab capital.) Baby, one year when she stuffed a fish, she must've been in a rush because the fish blew up in the oven. Don't think she didn't serve it anyway. And we ate every bit of it, too!

Now over the years, our family has grown. Including extended kin, as well as friends and folks who aren't able to be with their own families, there may be 20 or more of us gathered around the table. Last Thanksgiving was especially memorable. My twins had just come home from the hospital, and dinner was being held at my house. The table was all set, and we had gathered around so my father could bless the food. As he joined the circle, we bowed our heads and prepared for a heartfelt prayer. You know how Thanksgiving prayers drag on in some Black families. They're like church sermons; folks are nearly passing out trying to make it through the blessing. On this day, my father eyed all that good food, closed his eyes and uttered, "Thank you" and was done. No "Bless the food and the hands that prepared it." No "Thank you for family and good friends."

“Thanksgiving is a time for me to reflect on the year and give thanks for my many blessings.”

Just "Thank you." After a few moments of silence, thinking there was more to come, we opened our eyes to see if he was finished. He was already reaching for a piece of turkey. Baby, that's got to go down as the shortest prayer in the history of Thanksgiving prayers.

It's funny moments like that, and planning and preparing dinner filled with all our favorites that make the holidays so special. As you make plans to sit down with your loved ones, consider including these dishes from the lmes family table. ▶

## MO'NIQUE'S THANKSGIVING MENU

Roasted Turkey

Dressing

\*Orange Roughy  
With Crabmeat

\*Corn Pudding

\*Green Beans With Onion  
and Bacon

Cranberry Sauce

Dinner Rolls

\*Vette's Famous  
Apple Cobbler

\*Recipe provided

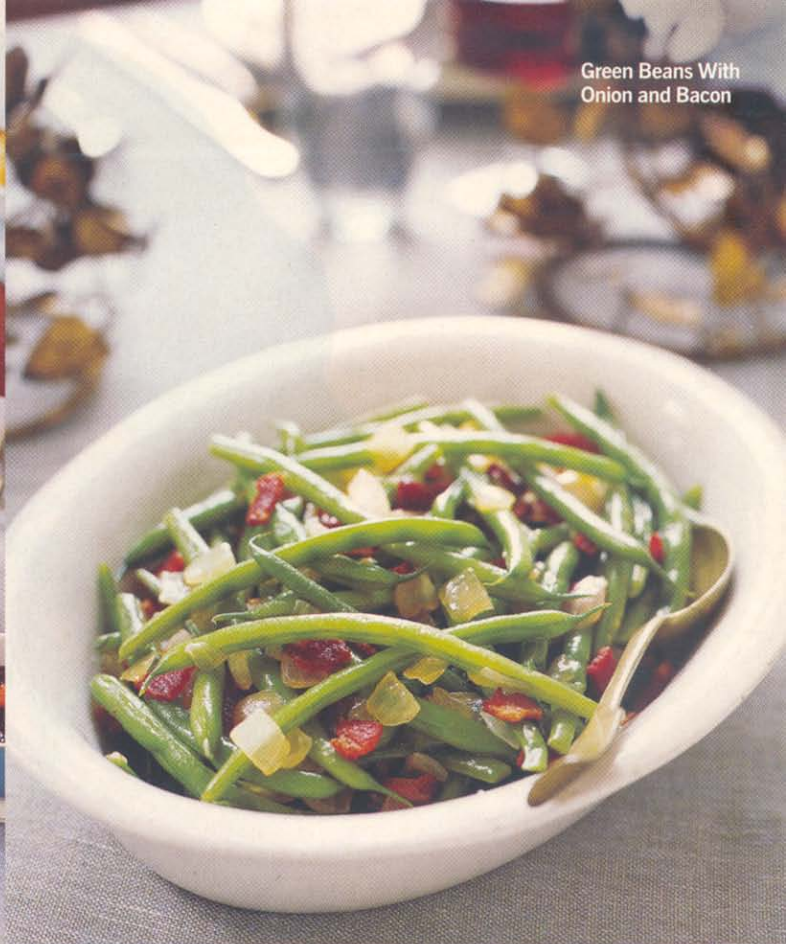
PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
FRANCES JANISCH

Text and recipes adapted from *Skinny Cooks Can't Be Trusted* by Mo'Nique with Sherri McGee McCovey (Amistad, \$26.95); recipe consultant, G. Garvin.

Family finery  
gracing the table



Green Beans With  
Onion and Bacon



Corn Pudding

Orange Roughy  
With Crabmeat

