

# Embrace food and family at the holidays

Yesterday, my coworker mentioned he went to a nearby bakery, and it started me thinking about the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday and all of the wonderful pies and pumpkin desserts that will be made. Food has such a way of bringing people together, especially during the holidays.

I have great memories of working in the kitchen with my mom at Christmas, my brother and I reaching out with sticky little fingers to dribble colorful sprinkles across sugar cookies in the shapes of Christmas trees, bells and Santas. Our decorating jobs were no “Top Chef” performance, but to us they were masterpieces of fun.

Trips to my grandfather’s farm for the holiday, where everyone would be clustered around the large kitchen helping to cook pots of mashed potatoes, green beans, stuffing, sauerkraut and sausage, ham and turkey, also bring back fond memories.

When it comes time to eat, we all scoot our chairs in to two big tables brimming with food - cousins, aunts, uncles and even a few little pups scurrying underfoot.

It’s quite a scene, and the conversation is all over the map. People shout from table to table, dogs bark, stories are told and people laugh so hard tears stream down their faces.

There’s a line from the movie “Wedding Date” that goes, “You know those families where everyone’s out of their mind, but at the end of the day, they’re your family so you love them? Mine’s not like that.”

That comment makes me laugh, because I can completely imagine where the lead character is coming from. Holiday gatherings with the family can be “interesting,” but at the end of the day, I do love, and am grateful for, everyone in my family. Special people will pass into and out of our lives. I feel like the holidays are the perfect time to breathe it all in - the wonderful food, the crazy family and all those who make a difference in our lives.