

Food, Holidays & Family Traditions

For the rituals that carry memory through taste, repetition, language and family habit.

This is preparation, not homework. You do not need complete dates, perfect memory, or a box of scanned records. Circle what helps. Leave the rest. Uncertainty is part of an honest history.

Before we speak

- List dishes by person rather than by recipe.
- Remember who prepared, served and cleaned up.
- Record what happened on ordinary Fridays, Sundays, birthdays and holidays.
- Include arguments, substitutions and funny failures; tradition is lived, not staged.

Gather only if it is easy

- Handwritten recipes
- Table and holiday photographs
- Menus, serving pieces or ritual objects
- Notes on words or expressions used only in the family

Prompts worth thinking about

- Who made the dish nobody else can reproduce?
- What was always on the table?
- What changed after immigration or marriage?
- Which tradition did you reject and later revive?
- What does the next generation still do?

Set your boundaries first

Before the interview, decide what may be explored, what should be handled carefully, and what is off limits. You can change those boundaries later. A useful history does not require surrendering privacy.

After the first conversation

No quotation is given before the first conversation. If the project is a fit, use the Story Mixer to show the balance you want - emotional depth, humour, intimacy, historical context, voice and boundaries. I then assess the actual scope and normally send a written quotation within 24 hours.

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