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## [Alternative Music](#)

### An Indie Rock Guide to Surviving Thanksgiving

From [Joey Rubin](#),  
Your Guide to [Alternative Music](#).  
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#### 5 New Fall Albums That Will Help

Chances are you're going to be home soon for Thanksgiving. Chances are you're going to spend a lot of time sitting around yawning. Chances are you'll be seeking some kind of escape – be it to a show downtown or to the private sounds of a new set of tunes in your ears.

To help, I've compiled a list, and short descriptions, of five new fall albums that can offer you said getaway. Follow my directions exactly and I promise your day of family intrusion and culinary infusion won't also be one of musical delusion. As a thank you, just make sure to save me some cranberry sauce.

#### **Damien Jurado: The Calm Before The Storm**

The morning of Thanksgiving is stressful. So before your awkward cousins from Omaha arrive, put on Damien Jurado's new release from Secretly Canadian, *And Now That I'm In Your Shadow*.

Jurado's mellow, solo-guitar folksiness will calm you down and put in perspective the lively family dinner you're dreading. "I can't get my soul to work/ I'll just talk loads of bullshit," Jurado sings in the halting "Gasoline Drinks." He's obviously talking about big family dinners, and those things family-time helps fortify against: loneliness, depression, finger-plucked minor chords. There's plenty of all three on this album -- and that's exactly why it's perfect for Thanksgiving morning. Listen and begin to gleefully anticipate the opposite.

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#### **The Stars of Track and Field: Embrace the Confusion**

As the family shuffles in, put on Portland's most melodic new offering, The Stars of Track and Field. Their excellent album, *Centuries Before Love And War*, shows a great deal of maturity for the young band -- they've added electronic textures to their already catchy tunes and the result is perfect. As the alluring smells of dinner-cooking fuse with the distracting chatter of a family running low on blood sugar, put on these euphonious and lilting songs. The way they balance two sounds, two moods, two styles and two vocalists will perfectly mirror the battle between hunger and insanity you'll be experiencing right before dinner time.

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#### **The May Fire: Bite, Chew and Swallow Hard**

Unfortunately for most, listening to music *during* Thanksgiving dinner isn't allowed. But if it was... I'd recommend turning on The May Fire. The self-titled debut from this female-fronted Bay Area group has both a driving rhythmic pulse and an abundance of dynamic melodies -- which makes it the perfect kind of music to help you scavenge your way through a too-big meal. "Lost Control," which compellingly builds from a brooding intro into a fully-fleshed chorus resembles -- deliciously -- the structure of the feast: from petty appetizer, to hearty turkey, to rich pumpkin pie dessert. Just don't put this album on before the meal, it, like your mother always warned, may ruin your appetite.

#### **The Silent Years: Enhance Your Dessert**

I don't expect you to pass up whatever baked goodness your cousin Marge spent all day slaving over -- but since you'll be smiling during this course for sure, you should put The Silent Years self-titled debut on in the background. It'll make the pie even sweeter. You will be shocked that an album this fully developed, this well-paced, this energized, could be a debut release. The bouncy guitar-work of "Someday"? The atmospheric consistency of "Take the Money Out"? The direct but pretty vocals of "Lost at Sea"? You've heard this all before -- only last time it wasn't nearly as good. Just like your pie, Marge. Never tasted better.

#### **The Gothic Archies: Post-Dinner Fun For Everyone**

After everyone is satiated (read: stuffed), gather them around a stereo and turn on the new release by The Magnetic Fields' Stephen Merritt: The Gothic Archies' theme music for the *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events* audiobooks. These tunes may not be Merritt at his most versatile, but they're definitely him at his most fun. Tracks like "Smile! No One Cares How You Feel" are perfect to entertain even the least dysfunctional family members -- before Turkey-coma sets in and you can escape to your room, or to the nearest place that isn't your parents home.

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And what should you listen to then? I don't know. Christmas carols?

**More Indie Rock Thanksgiving Treats**

[Silent Years Homepage](#)[The May Fire Homepage](#)[Damien Jurado Homepage](#)