

This week,

Americans celebrated Thanksgiving. On Wednesday, they were thankful their flight wasn't overbooked. On Thursday, they were thankful...because they had to be. And today, they're thankful they don't have to go to work.



As everyone in Slovenia seems to know, the Thanksgiving feast consists of turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie. What no one here seems to know is that the feast begins with every person at the table stating something they are thankful for this year.

The feast usually starts with the host thanking God or the people who prepared the meal or all the people gathered round the table, so once this »Big Three« is exhausted, you have to get pretty creative. Since lots of what I'm thankful for is editorially unprintable or uninteresting, I'm just going to throw a bunch of stuff out there. (I hope no Americans reading this are starving; this may take a while.)

Historically, I'm thankful that the Native Americans wanted metal pots and guns more than they wanted to kill the settlers. And for 150 years, the English were thankful for that too.

Locally, I'm thankful that I've grown accustomed to Slovenian coldness, and that I haven't imported it across the Atlantic. I'm thankful I can competently order a long black coffee; I'm less thankful I can competently order two mesni bureks after 11PM. I'm thankful for Slovenian basketball, which is every bit as exciting, but half as long. I'm thankful for 9/11 conspiracy theorists, because I haven't gotten to use my »I'm not listening« face since I was 10. I'm thankful to exchange this country's beautiful currency before it goes all Dutch guilder. I'm thankful I can distinguish between lepa and luštna, and I'm hopeful I can soon distinguish between vleci and rini. I'm thankful for the new people I've met and shared experiences with. Whoa, where'd that mush come from? On to more quotidian things.

Aesthetically, I'm thankful for that Gwen Stefani video, where the editor cuts between her and her ex-lover drinking coffee and a flashback of them kissing. That's so how memory works; you don't even need a memory after seeing that video. I'm thankful for this winter trend girls have of putting furry little pom-poms on their boots; that just screams eye party. I'm thankful to KUD for being one of the few coffee shops not playing pop radio AND for routinely putting up cool, accessible art. That place truly is a cornucopia. (That's another Thanksgiving thing.)

I'm thankful for being thankful, even when I'm not sure what I'm thankful for.

Ultimately, I'm thankful to my Mom for giving me a reason to write this column, namely me. Everyone reading this should thank their Moms too. (Do it; our mothers not getting any younger.)

I don't believe anyone in Slovenia got organized and rattled off a litany of thanks this week, so I'm going to ambush my friends and colleagues to see what they're thankful for. I don't expect weirdo Americans getting in their faces to rank too high. ■