

November 2016

A Special Supplement to

The Oneida Dispatch

HOME

for the Holidays

Festive Feeding

Tips for first time hosts

Revisit Christmas Traditions

Holiday Hosting How-To

Prepare your home for holiday guests

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HOME

for the Holidays



- 3 Home for the holidays
- 4 How to handle holiday hosting
- 5 5 ways to make holiday guests comfortable
- 6 Keep the holiday season healthy, safe and secure
- 8 Make holiday shopping special
- 9 Simple ways to dress up your home for the holidays
- 10 Be smart when shopping on your phone
- 12 Revisit lesser-known Christmas traditions
- 13 Christmas tree facts
- 16 Tips for less stressful holiday travel
- 18 Tips for first time dinner hosts
- 19 Catering for holiday entertaining
- 23 Safety is key



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To Subscribe

Newstand: Tues. & Thurs. \$1.00 Sunday \$1.50

Home Delivery: \$4.15/Week



Home for the holidays

Christmas carols and festive songs help make the holidays complete by setting the mood for the festivities to come. Songs resonate differently with people during the holiday season. For example, some celebrants find certain holiday tunes or lyrics especially poignant. Those who might be missing home or planning on visiting friends and relatives who live far away during the holiday season often find the words to “(There’s No Place Like) Home for the Holidays,” are an accurate portrayal of the sentiments of holiday traveling. Composed by Robert Allen, with lyrics by Al Stillman, “(There’s No Place Like) Home for the Holidays” was published in 1954. The best-known recordings of the song are by Perry Como, who recorded it twice — once in 1954 and then again in 1959 with a different musical arrangement. The first version reached #8 on the Billboard magazine chart in the United States. The Carpenters recorded another popular version of the song for their 1984 album, “An Old-Fashioned Christmas.” Nora Jones and Cyndi Lauper also recorded a duet version of the song in 2011.

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How to handle holiday hosting



participation. When everyone brings something along and helps, it frees up time to spend together rather than worrying about what needs cooking in the kitchen or whether a last-minute trip to the store is in order.

Downsize

Festive feelings may inspire you to expand your guest list. Social people understandably want to invite all of their circles of friends, but an overwhelming guest list can make hosting more difficult. If you have trouble paring down the guest list, consider hosting separate parties, designating one for family and another for friends.

You can even downsize your offerings to lessen some your load. Rather than spending days in the kitchen making unique apps, stock up on chips, snacks and premade appetizers so you have enough food. If you want to make one or two appetizers from scratch, stick to a handful of tried-and-true recipes and convenience items so you're not worrying about kitchen-testing new things.

Holiday revelers tend to be busy with social engagements — from corporate parties to cocktails with close friends — between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Chances are, many people will be attending a party and/or hosting their own this holiday season.

While attending a party requires little of celebrants other than a willingness to have a good time, hosting a holiday get-together can be hard work. But hosts can heed a few time-tested strategies to ensure they and their guests make the most of their time together this holiday season.



Forget perfection

Television, movies and advertisements paint an unrealistic picture of what the holidays should be. Don't get down if a holiday party that would make Norman Rockwell proud is beyond your capabilities. Rather than trying to plan a picture-perfect holiday party, channel your energy into what you do best. Cook up a holiday feast if you love being in the kitchen, or decorate till you drop if you love to deck the halls. The point of the party is to gather with family and friends, so no need to worry about throwing a perfect party.

Enlist helpers

Ask others to contribute to the party so all of the work is not on your shoulders. A potluck party is a great way to encourage

Hiring a bartender or wait staff for a holiday party frees up more time to socialize with your friends and family members.

Hire professionals

If you're simply too busy to handle hosting but still want to invite loved ones, hire some professional help. Hire wait staff to tend to guests during the party, and book a cleaning service to clean your home in the days before the party. Don't hesitate to have the party catered if you prefer your gathering not be potluck.

Holiday hosting can be a big time commitment, but there are ways to make hosting easier regardless of how busy you are.

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5 ways to make holiday guests comfortable



The time between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day marks one of the busiest periods of the year for long-distance travel. The United States Department of Transportation says that come Thanksgiving, the number of long-distance trips (50+ miles away) increases by 54 percent, and around Christmas that number rises by 23 percent over the remainder of the year. Those travelers ultimately need a place to rest their heads, and many stay with family and friends.

Entertaining during the holiday season involves accounting for guests' comfort, and that often means hosts must put their visitors' needs over their own. Although some sacrifices need to be made, there is a way to find a happy compromise that can help the holidays go smoothly and happily. Consider these ways to help guests feel welcome whether they stay for a few hours or a few days.

1. Cater to specific dietary needs.

One of the ways to treat guests kindly is by being aware of any special dietary needs they may have when it comes to preparing holiday meals or other foods during their visits. Some guests may require low-sodium diets, while others may be monitoring their blood-sugar levels and must dine accordingly. Vegetarians and vegans limit the foods they eat, while others may avoid foods based on religious preferences. Offer a variety of foods and try to cater to guests' needs as much as

possible. When in doubt, consult with the guest so he or she feels welcome and does not go hungry.

2. Make sleeping spaces as private as possible. Not everyone has a separate guest room for overnight stays, but try to make sleeping areas as private as you can when visitors spend the night. Use privacy screens or set guests up in a family room that's away from the center of activity. Hosts may want to give up their own rooms for the comfort of guests.

3. Offer storage space. One way to make guests feel comfortable is to give them their own storage space. This can include space in a closet, a couple of drawers to stow their belongings, or hangers in the entryway for coats and other winter attire. Not only will this keep things more organized, it can provide guests with comfort.



4. Include guests when preparing for entertaining. Many guests like to feel involved, and by including them in meal preparation, decorating or shopping, you can help them feel included and appreciated.

5. Keep snacks and other creature comforts readily accessible. Guests may feel sheepish scavenging through cabinets or drawers looking for items. Make things



easy to find by leaving items out on counters or indicating where items can be found. For example, if you know a guest enjoys an evening cup of tea and some cookies, leave out the cookies, tea bags and kettle so that he or she can indulge when the urge comes.

Guests are a large part of the holiday season. Help them feel comfortable whenever they visit your home.

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Keep the holiday season healthy, safe and secure



Deter home burglars when traveling for the holidays by using motion-sensor lights and keeping up the appearance that someone is home.

During the holiday season, many people do not want their thoughts to stray to anything unpleasant. Although celebrating may be the primary goal come the holiday season, individuals and families also should devote some attention to keeping the holidays safe.

Just because it's Chanukah, Christmas or New Year's doesn't mean safety and security should not remain a top priority. The following guidelines can help families enjoy a holiday season that is healthy, safe and secure.

Exercise caution when decorating. Decorations can be beautiful, but they also can be hazardous if not used properly. Overloading outlets is commonplace during the holiday season, but that can lead to home fires. Exercise caution around candles and other open flames. Pets may become tangled in wires or knock over glass ornaments. Keep delicate decorations away from harm.

Wash hands to prevent germs. As the cold weather arrives, people may spend greater periods of time indoors or in close proximity to other people. The holidays also are about greeting friends and relatives, and embracing or kissing. Do not ruin the festivities by spreading germs. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says the holiday season is also flu season. The CDC recommends celebrants wash their hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20

seconds to remove germs.

Keep track of curious children. Children are enamored with the sights and sounds of the holidays and may be more curious than ever during this time of year. Things adults take for granted can be hazards to youngsters. The needles of holiday trees can cause painful cuts in the mouth and throat of a child who swallows them. Snow sprays may be harmful if the aerosol propellants are used improperly. Peanuts and popcorn used for decorating can pose potential choking hazards to young children.

Be a smart host or hostess. Alcoholic beverages and holiday revelry sometimes go hand in hand. Responsible party hosts know when a guest has had too much and will arrange safe transportation home. Because kids imitate adults, many may drink the beverages they see adults drinking. Alcohol poisoning is a real risk for children, so pay attention to youngsters no matter how young they may be.

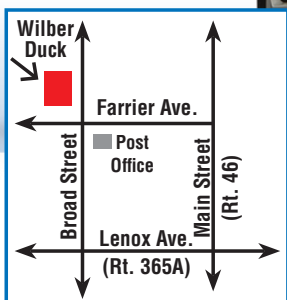
Protect the home. Deter home burglars when traveling for the holidays by having neighbors keep a watchful eye on your house. Use motion-sensor lights, keep up the appearance that someone is home by having mail collected, and do not advertise any travel plans on social media. Investment in a home security system if need be.

Ensure a happier holiday season by making safety and health a priority.

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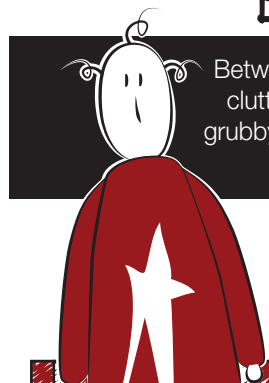


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Make holiday shopping excursions special



Holiday shopping can be even more fun when it takes place with a group of girlfriends.

As they fulfill the social obligations of the holiday season, many people find themselves spending less time at home. Consumer Reports notes that individuals spend a great deal of time shopping for gifts come the holiday season. Americans engage in 15 hours of shopping on average, with women spending twice as long as their male counterparts (20 hours versus 10). In addition, the average person devotes 10 or more hours to wrapping and returning gifts.

Holiday shopping can monopolize people's time away from home during the months of November and December, and some shoppers wonder how they become so disconnected from other activities, including family time, that they cherish throughout the rest of the year. One way to tackle holiday shopping without sacrificing time with family and friends is to make holiday shopping a social event.

• Invite friends or family along.

Recreate the days of your youth when it was fun to meet friends at the mall and scour the shops. Plan a meeting location and have an itinerary in place. Divide shopping lists so that everyone shares the task of shopping and fatigue doesn't set in prematurely.

• Make lunch or dinner part of the day.

Incorporate refueling into your shopping plans. Failure to eat or drink can lead to

hunger pangs and test shoppers' patience, two factors that are seldom conducive to successful shopping. Having an end goal to meet friends or family at a nearby restaurant — even a dining location right within the mall — can inspire intrepid shoppers to get their work done promptly. Reward yourself for a job well done over a tasty meal and maybe a cocktail. Just be sure to indulge responsibly.

• Break up the day with a flick.

Many malls also play home to movie theaters. Plan your shopping around the movie schedule so you can take a two-hour break to rest and relax in the theater. Chances are you'll come out of the film relaxed, refreshed and ready to tackle the rest of your shopping list.

• Make it a date night.

The thought of shopping may not conjure up ideas of romance, but if time is short, couples can use shopping excursions as an opportunity to spend time together. Visit a coffee shop or a bar for a nightcap afterward and enjoy some one-on-one time. Parents can enlist the help of a babysitter to keep children entertained while they enjoy some uninterrupted time with each other.

Shopping fills the days leading to the holidays. Make the most of such excursions by inviting friends and family along.



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Simple ways to dress up your home for the holidays



The holiday season is rife with traditions that focus on fun and family. One such testament to the festive spirit of the holiday season is the many homes and businesses decorated with the lights and colors that have



become synonymous with the season.

Decorating for the holiday season can be time-consuming. While decking the halls may not consume as much time as holiday shopping and wrapping presents, according to data from a 2013 American Time Use Survey, interior and exterior decorating for the holidays may consume anywhere from 2.5 to 3 hours per session.

Holiday decorating includes things as simple as setting up a menorah or as complex as stringing lights on the exterior of a home. Though elaborate displays can take hours to erect, time-crunched holiday celebrants can still create festive, welcoming displays.

Hang holiday wreaths. Holiday enthusiasts without much time to decorate can invest in a couple of holiday wreaths, which can be dressed up as much or as little as celebrants



prefer. If you do not have the time to string lights on the house, wrap them around wreaths hung in windows or hang the wreaths on a home's main entrance. Celebrants who want to go a less traditional route can hang wreaths made of holly, citrus fruits, ribbons, or any other greenery instead of the more customary evergreen wreaths.

Decorate with ornaments. Ornaments are not exclusive to Christmas trees. Fill a vase or bowl with metallic ornaments and place it in a prominent location, such as a busy hallway or the foyer of your home. Hang ornaments on clear filament from the mantle or within the main window of the house, where they can reflect tree lights and add sparkle.

Bring in more greenery. Drape evergreen boughs on staircase handrailings or on the mantle, or use greenery to frame doorways. The scent will be inviting and things instantly will look more festive.

Use throws and decorative pillows. Change the look of a room with holiday-colored decor if you do not want to clutter the space with knickknacks. A red and green blanket draped over the sofa can give off a comforting holiday vibe.

Focus on the front door and entryway. Celebrants who do not have the time to decorate their entire homes can create a warm, inviting space by decorating their front doors and entryways. Place greenery, bows, tinsel, lights, and winter-inspired accessories by the front door so friends and family visiting for the season catch the holiday spirit the moment they walk through the door.

Place LED candles in windows. Rather than contending with twinkle lights and electric cords, homeowners can employ battery-operated faux candles to create a homey appeal in windows and hallways throughout their homes. Simplify holiday decorating with some easy tips to make houses cozy and festive.

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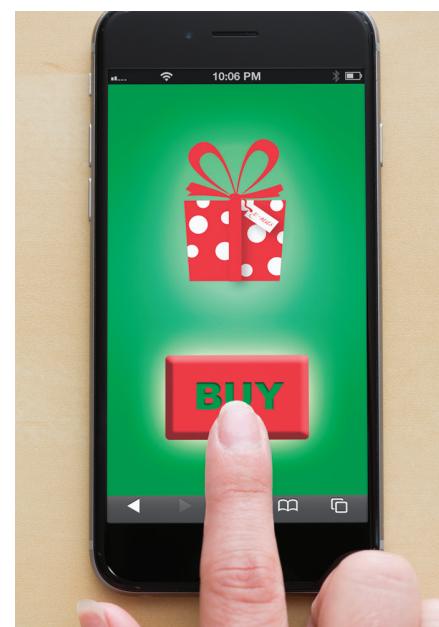
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Holiday shopping is an annual tradition for many people. But while it may be customary to exchange gifts with loved ones during the holiday season, how those gifts are purchased has changed dramatically over the last decade and a half.

Thanks to advancements in technology, many holiday shoppers get their shopping done without ever setting foot in malls or shopping centers. And data indicates more and more shoppers are using their smartphones to do their holiday shopping. According to Nielsen Mobile Measurement, the number of mobile shoppers in December 2014 rose to 138.1 million users, an increase of nearly 14 million users from the same period just a year earlier. And mobile shoppers averaged nearly a full hour more shopping on the Web from their mobile phones in 2014 than in 2013.

Convenience often drives shoppers' decisions to use their mobile phones during the holiday season. But it's important that shoppers not sacrifice security for the sake of convenience. Those who want the best of both worlds this holiday season can take several steps to protect their personal information while shopping on their smartphones.

- Only use shopping apps with which you're comfortable. Downloading an app only takes a few seconds, and some shoppers are so used to downloading apps they may not realize just what they're downloading. Before installing an app on your phone, familiarize yourself with the app and what it requests of its user. Some apps ask users for a considerable amount of personal information, even though there is no legitimate reason for them to have that information. If you're uncomfortable with apps that require you to allow access

to your location and other potentially sensitive information, don't download the app.

- Sign out when you stop using an app. It may be convenient to stay signed in to an app at all times, but that can leave you vulnerable to hackers and/or thieves. Many apps store users' credit card numbers so shoppers don't have to enter such information each time they make a purchase. If you stay signed in to an app at all times, hackers who access your smartphone can then access your credit card information, as can thieves should your phone be stolen. Signing out when you finish using an app provides an extra measure of protection.

- Turn off automatic connections. Many smartphones enable users to automatically connect to nearby Wi-Fi networks so they can seamlessly access the Internet regardless of where they are. However, some Wi-Fi networks are fraudulent, and you may unknowingly be transmitting sensitive data through such networks when you automatically log on. Disable automatic connections, only logging on to secure Wi-Fi networks when out in public.

- Browse but don't buy. Shoppers who are especially concerned about smartphone security may want to use apps and their smartphone's Internet connections to browse rather than buy. Avoid logging into apps or websites when using your smartphone, instead browsing deals and jotting them down on the phone's notes app. You can then make purchases once you gain access to a secure network, such as the one at your home or office.


Holiday shoppers are increasingly turning to their smartphones to do their holiday shopping. While the convenience of such devices may be unrivaled, consumers must prioritize security over expediency.

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Revisit lesser-known Christmas traditions



Christmas celebrants participate in many different traditions year after year, but some may not fully understand the meaning behind such activities. A Christian holiday, Christmas did not originate with all activities centralized to the church. In fact, many of the traditions people hold dear have pagan roots, which were adapted as Christmas celebrations evolved.

People who hang mistletoe in doorways may be surprised to learn that this tradition dates back to the ancient Druids. The Druids believed mistletoe possessed mystical powers that brought good luck to the household and warded off evil spirits.

Evergreen trees are now associated with Christmas trees, but evergreen boughs were once used to decorate homes during the winter solstice to help people envision the spring to come. Christians often look at evergreen trees as a sign of everlasting life and their relationship with God.

However, while many Christmas traditions continue to be an integral part of annual celebrations, there are some customs that have fallen out of favor. Although these traditions may no longer be widely practiced, anyone can revive them and make them part of their holiday celebrations.

Wassailing is a custom that has ancient origins and is not as popular today as it once was. "Wassail" comes from the Anglo-Saxon phrase "waes hael," which means, "good health." Wassail is a drink made of mulled ale, spices and other

ingredients. To go wassailing meant to travel door-to-door singing and offering a drink from a wassail bowl in exchange for gifts. Wassailing has been mentioned in certain Christmas carols, including "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."

Largely an English tradition, wassailing was brought to America by British settlers. January 17th, the old Twelfth Night, is the traditional date for wassailing. Although wassailing has largely fallen by the wayside, increased interest in ales and craft brewing may help revitalize this Christmas tradition, which can inspire community spirit.

Gifts with fruit cake is another tradition that has been much maligned and does not enjoy the same popularity that it once did. Fruit cake is a cake made with chopped candied fruit, nuts and spices and is occasionally soaked in spirits. Fruit cakes have been enjoyed all over the world, but Americans may never have embraced the Christmas fruit cake tradition as much as those from other countries. However, with the right recipe and an open mind, it may be possible to resurrect the fruit cake tradition once again.

Mummers plays are another British tradition that arrived in North America with settlers but has largely fallen by the wayside. Mummers plays involved miming folk dramas, and the plays were commonplace around the holiday season. Celebrants may want to research such dramas and include them in this year's festivities to liven up celebrations even more.

Traditions passed on through the years help make Christmas a favorite time of celebration. People may want to explore the less popular traditions today and once again make them interesting parts of this year's festivities.

Christmas tree facts



One of the most recognizable symbols of the holiday season, Christmas trees can be seen in private homes, public spaces and many prominent locations beginning each December. Christmas trees come in all shapes and sizes, and families may prefer certain types of trees, including aromas, needle types and fullness.

Christmas trees have a diverse history. The following are some facts about Christmas trees that holiday celebrants may or may not be familiar with.

- Many harvested Christmas trees do not grow in the wild, but are raised on farms.

Christmas trees are an agricultural product.

- Roughly one million acres are dedicated to tree farming.
- Approximately 25 to 30 million real Christmas trees are sold in the United States every year.
- The top Christmas tree-producing states are Oregon, North Carolina, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Washington.
- It can take as many as 15 years for a tree to grow to the typical height required of a Christmas tree.
- Every state in the United States grows Christmas trees.

- Germans are credited with bringing the first Christmas trees into the home and decorating them in the spirit of Christmas. The first recorded reference to the Christmas tree dates back to the 16th century.
- Tree farms are beneficial to the environment because they reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the air and help counter global warming.
- The most common Christmas tree species are balsam fir, Douglas-fir, Fraser fir, noble fir, Scotch pine, Virginia pine and white pine.
- Christmas trees can be recycled into mulch.



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- 🌲 Recycle your Christmas Trees and Wreaths - Remove Wire
- 🌲 Recycle your Christmas wrapping and tissue paper
- 🌲 Christmas Cards are recyclable too, but not those with foil
- 🌲 Recycle your No. 6 Styrofoam packaging. Must be white and clean – no peanuts.
- 🌲 Cardboard boxes and other cardboard items are recyclable
- 🌲 Backyard compost your kitchen food scraps from holiday dinners and parties, but **do not** compost your turkey meat and bones.
- 🌲 Buy a live tree and plant it in your backyard after the holidays or take your cut tree to one of Madison County's transfer stations for composting.
- 🌲 Save wrapping paper, ribbon and bows to be reused the following year.
- 🌲 Buy only durable products that will last a long time and can be reused or repaired
- 🌲 Donate good, clean and workable toys to a charitable organization.
- 🌲 Remove your name from the mailing list of any catalog you no longer wish to receive.
- 🌲 Look for gifts with the least amount of packaging
- 🌲 Give environmental gifts like reusable tote bags, lunch bags, travel mugs, homemade foods and handmade items.
- 🌲 Purchase holiday cards and wrapping paper made from recycled paper with the highest post-consumer content you can find.

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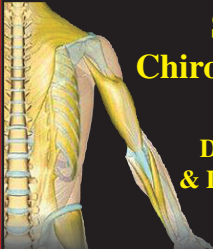
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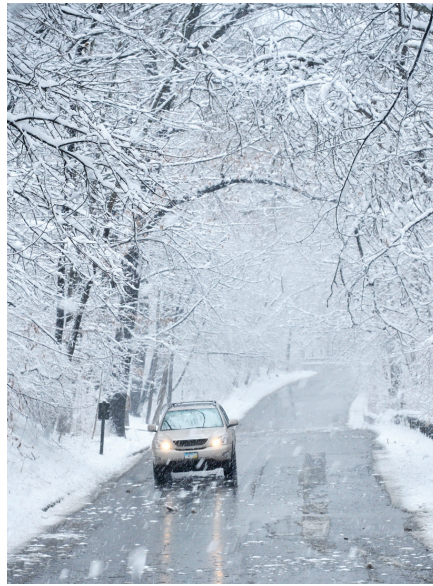
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Tips for less stressful holiday travel



Roadways, railways and skies tend to get busy come the holiday season, when millions of people across the globe travel to visit family and friends.

Wherever travelers are headed, be it across the country or across the world, they should realize that many other people are traveling as well. That can lead to traffic, long lines and other side effects associated with large crowds. But before travelers let the idea of challenging travel conditions deter them, they can consider certain ways to make the process of getting from point A to point B a bit more manageable.

Travel by car

Those traveling by automobile will have a few extra steps to take to ensure their trips go off with minimal disturbances. One of the more important steps is to ensure the vehicle is properly maintained prior to departing. Have the car checked by a mechanic and take care of any service appointments, such as oil changes or tire rotations.

Map out the route in advance and have an alternative plan if the route chosen proves to be too congested. One idea is to choose a scenic drive that may be a little longer but has less traffic. In addition, account for rest stops or points of interest that can break up the trip. Apps such as GasBuddy can help drivers find the cheapest gas or the cleanest bathrooms along their routes.

Bring along plenty of snacks so you can eat healthy and aren't forced to rely on foods you otherwise would not eat. This is particularly helpful with keeping kids satiated. Plan for a few treats along the way so that everyone traveling has an end goal, such as an ice cream or a souvenir.



Traveling by plane

One of the key things air travelers can do to make holiday traveling easier is to avoid peak travel dates. Whenever possible, avoid traveling the day right before the holiday, which tends to be the busiest and most expensive. Remember, weekends tend to be more harried and expensive as well, particularly when the holidays fall in close proximity to a weekend.

Weather is a gamble in many regions of the world during the holiday season. Develop a contingency plan just in case foul weather delays or cancels flights. It's much less stressful to put plan B into motion than it can be to rush around trying to make new, last-minute plans.

Always shop around for the best rates, but also the best atmosphere. It may be wiser to fly out of a smaller airport where crowds will be thinner and delays less frequent, or you may prefer a larger airport that's closer to home and offers more amenities.

Another way to avoid delays is to pack minimally. Ship gifts and even travel essentials ahead to your destination, and only bring carry-on bags aboard the plane. This helps travelers sail through security checks and avoid the crowds at the luggage carousels.

Holiday travel requires planning, patience and having alternative plans in place so that everyone can make it home for the holidays.

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Tips for first-time holiday dinner hosts

Hosting a holiday meal for loved ones provides an exciting opportunity to bring family and friends together during a special time of year. First-time hosts may be a little nervous and put pressure on themselves to make the meal just right. But there are a few tricks of the trade novices can employ to calm their nerves and enjoy their first foray into holiday hosting.

Go with what you know. Experimenting in the kitchen can be fun, but such experimentation should be avoided when hosting for the holidays. When planning the menu for your holiday dinner, choose a main course that you have prepared in the past. Familiarity can calm your nerves, and you're less likely to forget key ingredients when preparing a meal you have made several times in the past. If you want to experiment a little, do so with desserts that you can prepare and test for taste several days in advance. If the desserts don't pan out, you will still have a few days to find an alternative.

Get a head start wherever possible. The day friends and family are coming to visit figures to be hectic. In addition to preparing the meal, hosts must also ready their homes so they can create a welcoming environment for their guests. Once you have chosen the menu, look for items that can be prepared in advance of the big day. Desserts can often be made several days in advance, as can certain side dishes. Do as much prep work for the main course the night before the meal as possible.

Double check your pantry. Even if you're making a meal you have made a dozen times in the past, peruse your pantry to make sure you have every ingredient you're going to need. If you're used to making the meal for four people but will now be making the meal for 12 of them, make sure you have enough of each ingredient to make the meal in bulk. To make things easier,



update your recipe to reflect the additional guests before going to the grocery store. Doing so guarantees you won't run out of ingredients once you start preparing the meal.

Ask guests to bring nonessential items. Guests will likely offer to bring something to the holiday dinner, and there's nothing wrong with accepting help. But don't ask guests to bring items that are essential to the meal, as that can delay the meal if guests get stuck in traffic or show up late. Instead, ask guests to bring a bottle of wine, a small dessert or even some snacks guests can eat while waiting for the main course.

Ask about food allergies. While hosts don't need to cater to every food allergy under the sun, ask each guest if there is any particular food or ingredient they absolutely must avoid. If enough guests admit they must avoid a particular dish, you then know not to prepare it. In addition, have plenty of vegetables on hand for guests who are vegan or vegetarian.

Holiday hosting is fun, and first-time hosts can make it even more fun by employing a few veteran tricks of the trade.

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Catering takes the work out of holiday entertaining

As enjoyable as the holiday season may be, quite a number of people admit to feeling pressured by the demands of shopping, wrapping and hosting events. According to a poll from the American Psychological Association, up to 70 percent of people feel stressed out by a lack of time and/or money during the holidays.

Stress can take its toll during the holidays. But stress does not have to turn this festive time of year into something less enjoyable. By removing some of the work involved in holiday planning and hosting, individuals can free up time and enjoy a more relaxing holiday season. For example, holiday hosts may spend several weeks organizing their holiday meals, hours shopping for the ingredients and still more time preparing and cooking the food. By enlisting the services of a professional caterer, hosts can still throw festive parties with great food while letting someone else deal with the stress of meal planning.

When you decide to have your holiday party catered, keep a few factors in mind as you consider your options.

caterers who may not be the best people to work with.

TIMING

The holiday season is a busy time of year for many businesses, caterers included. The sooner the contract is negotiated, the better. Lock in the date and desired foods as soon as you decide to use a caterer. The longer you wait, the more your options dwindle, as caterers' schedules tend to book up quickly come the holiday season. Have a second-favorite caterer at the ready in case the first one is booked solid.

PACKAGES

Some caterers will only provide the food. Others are full-service providers and will bring much of what's needed to entertain. This can include cutlery, plates, chafing dishes, napkins, linens, condiments, and more. Understand fully what each potential catering package includes. It may be worth spending a little more for a package that's all-inclusive rather than saving money on a package that requires you to do a lot of work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If you have never used a local caterer before, seek recommendations from neighbors and friends. There are many different types of caterers, and some restaurants even provide catering services. Recommendations can help hosts find the right caterer for the style of gathering they're hoping to host and help them avoid

SOMETHING SPECIAL

Holiday hosts can personalize catered affairs by including one signature dish or drink. If drinks don't seem like a good fit, consider creating a dipping sauce, glaze or another homemade item. This puts a personal touch on the meal with minimal effort.

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BECAUSE SAFETY IS KEY, PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE!



It probably comes as no surprise that **more traffic fatalities due to drunk driving occur around the New Year's holiday than any other time of year.** Of course, drivers should never drink and drive. With your safety in mind, these community sponsors urge you to review these important tips for hosting or attending a safe celebration!

A New Year is coming bringing much celebration,
With good friends and good times and free-flowing libation --
So party on hearty, but leave driving alone,
Because we want to see you get safely home!

“Key” Strategies For A Safe New Year's Celebration:

- **Plan an alcohol-free celebration** – Host a fondue or “make your own” ice cream sundae party as a fresh alternative. Add some fun party games to keep guests entertained without drinking!
- **Check your keys with the host** – This is an effective strategy for giving the host some control over inebriated guests.
- **Keep the number of a taxi company handy** – A good tip for both party guests and hosts alike.
- **Offer to drive a guest home** – Start the New Year off right by performing a good deed and help keep drunk drivers off the road.
- **Appoint a designated driver** – Use the buddy system and you can return the favor next time.
- **Provide lots of snacks to party guests** – Drinking on an empty-stomach rapidly increases the potentially destabilizing effects of alcohol.
- **Post transportation info on party invites** – Include information for public transportation, carpools and taxi company phone numbers.
- **Don't let a friend drive drunk** – Take the car keys away or use one of the strategies above to see your friends safely home.







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