

## PARTIES/CELEBRATIONS HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING TIPS

- Start shopping for non-perishables and frozen items a month before and purchase these when on sale
- Shop discount stores for table linens, napkins and table decorations
- Purchase pre-made meals from the local grocery store or restaurant offering specials
- Plan ahead activities for the guests to help so they aren't in your way
- If you are a guest, don't forget a small token of your appreciation & send a thank you note afterwards
- Keep club soda or other 'green' cleaning products nearby in case of an accident
- Make recycling bins handy for guests to use
- Provide at least one dish for people who are vegetarians, allergic to wheat or other special diets

*Tip: Ask guests ahead of time diet restrictions*

- Have guests & family write down what they're thankful for and then read out loud and guess whose it is
- Have family members submit ideas for a new holiday family tradition
- Have guests bring a unique dish to pass along with copies of the recipe for everyone
- Serve a special drink (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) instead of having the cost of stocking a full bar
- Use nature to decorate your table and around the house (twigs, pinecones, evergreens)
- Create a play list of holiday music on your MP3, set up your holiday CD's or use the holiday music provided by your cable or dish carrier
- For less expensive live music, look for local high school or college talent
- Volunteer your whole family to serve dinner to the less fortunate instead of cooking
- Make decorative leftover containers and send food home with guests
- Invite people you know who can't spend holiday with their own family
- Have meal catered and light a pumpkin spice candle for effect
- Make reservations at your favorite restaurant serving the holiday dinner

*Tip: To keep costs down consider a holiday breakfast out instead*

- Start a new tradition: ask your husband to volunteer with the men to clean up after the dinner
- Make as many as possible of the food items a day or two before so you can watch the parade on TV or just sit and relax a little before the big event
- Host a buffet instead of a sit down dinner especially if you have a group too large for your dining table
- If friends or relatives live nearby suggest a progressive dinner (appetizers, soup/salad, main course and dessert are each held at a different home)

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