



HOLIDAY *hosting*

Make Every
Gathering
Merry & Bright

Geneseo
CURRENT

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When it comes to holiday hosting, the little things make the biggest difference. Guests may remember the food and conversation, but what truly sets a gathering apart is the atmosphere. The right music, lighting, and scents can transform an ordinary evening into something magical, warm, and unforgettable.

Music That Feels Like the Season

Start by curating a playlist that matches the mood of your gathering.

- **Upbeat & Festive:** Think classic holiday hits that encourage laughter and energy — perfect for family gift exchanges.

- **Warm & Cozy:** Choose acoustic, jazz, or instrumental versions of familiar songs for intimate dinners.
- **Local Flavor:** Ask a local musician or DJ for their favorite seasonal tracks to give your playlist a hometown touch.

(Pro Tip: Share your playlist link with guests afterward — it's a fun takeaway that keeps your gathering alive long after the night ends.)

Cozy Lighting Ideas

Lighting sets the tone the moment guests arrive. Skip the harsh overhead lights and think layers:

- Candles: Partner with local candle makers for festive scents and beautiful jars that double as décor.
- String Lights: Drape them along mantels, banisters, or tables for a soft glow.
- Dimmers & Lamps: Lower the brightness and let cozy corners invite conversation.
- Even a simple cluster of candles on a tray can make a room feel instantly warm and welcoming.

Scents of the Season

Scent is the fastest way to trigger nostalgia — one whiff of cinnamon, pine, or clove, and it feels like the holidays.

How to Make Your Home Smell Like the Holidays:

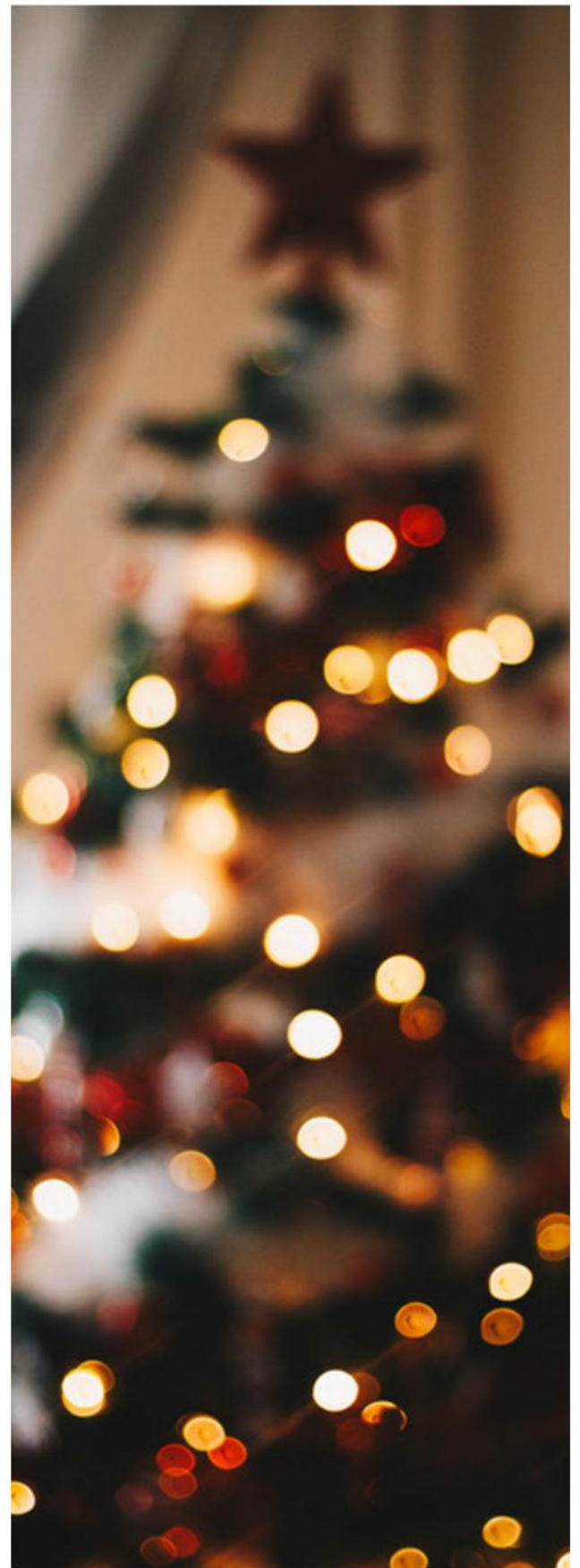
- Candles & Wax Melts: Support local makers who blend seasonal scents like spiced cranberry, pine forest, or sugar cookie.
- Essential Oil Diffusers: Try blends of orange, clove, and cinnamon for a warm, spiced aroma.
- Simmer Pots: A stovetop recipe guests will notice the moment they walk in.

★ Holiday Simmer Pot Recipe

- 1 sliced orange
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3-4 whole cloves
- A few sprigs of rosemary
- 2-3 cups of water

Add ingredients to a saucepan, bring to a gentle simmer, and let the fragrance fill your home. Keep adding water as needed.

Final Touch: Combine these three elements — music, lighting, and scent — and you'll create a space that feels less like a checklist of tasks and more like the holiday haven everyone wants to come back to year after year.



The 48-Hour House Reset

We've all been there — family or friends are on their way, and suddenly the house feels anything but ready. The good news? You don't need weeks of scrubbing to make your home shine. With this 48-Hour House Reset, you'll have a quick plan to declutter, refresh, and prep the spaces that matter most so guests feel welcome the moment they step inside.

Day One THE BIG RESET



Declutter the Zones That Matter

- Clear the entryway of shoes, coats, and mail piles.
- Tidy the living room by stashing toys, remotes, and paperwork into baskets.
- Reset the kitchen counters-- put away appliances and wipe down surfaces.



Deep-Clean the Hot Spots

- Vacuum and mop high-traffic floors.
 - Wipe down tables, counters, and handles.
- Give windows and mirrors a streak-free shine.
- Empty trash and clear old leftovers from the fridge.



Day Two

THE FINISHING TOUCHES



Guest Bathroom Prep

- Stock clean towels, soap, and extra toilet paper.
- Add a candle or diffuser for instant freshness.
- Do a last-minute sink, toilet, and mirror wipe.



Power-Clean Shortcuts

- Keep a laundry basket handy to scoop stray clutter and tuck it out of sight.
- Close doors to unused rooms.
- Spray fabric refresher on upholstery and curtains.
- Adjust lamps and candles for cozy lighting (which hides minor messes too!).

In just 48 hours, you can transform your home from lived-in to guest-ready. By tackling the heavy lifting first and saving easy wins for the final hours, you'll welcome guests into a space that feels fresh, cozy, and holiday-ready — without burning yourself out.



One Table, Every Guest: Holiday Hosting with NOSH

Holiday meals are about bringing people together—but planning a menu for a crowd with gluten-free, dairy-free, vegetarian, or other dietary needs can feel like juggling knives. That’s where NOSH shines. The locally owned healthy food and specialty-items shop curates practical swaps and crowd-pleasing staples so hosts can build a menu that welcomes everyone—without rewriting every family recipe.

Start with the guest list, not the grocery list

Before you shop, jot down who’s coming and note common needs (GF, DF, vegetarian/vegan, nut-free, soy-free). Aim for one main + two sides that most guests can enjoy, then round out with a few “everyone” extras (salad, roasted veg, fruit). NOSH’s team can help translate that plan into a simple cart: what to substitute, what to keep, and which products work well for mixed-diet tables.



Build a menu everyone can share

Think “modular” rather than one-size-fits-all. Roast a tray of seasonal vegetables (olive oil, salt, herbs) and serve sauces on the side; offer a smaller side of mashed potatoes and gravy-- both dairy and flour-free; make a generous salad with nuts and cheese in separate bowls. NOSH carries dressings, oils, spices, and finishing salts that elevate simple recipes without adding common allergens.

A sample spread

- Main: Herb-roasted turkey or a hearty vegetable lasagna (GF/DF options available with noodles and cheese swaps from NOSH)
- Sides: Citrus-roasted carrots, green beans with toasted GF panko, maple-thyme sweet potatoes, mixed-greens salad with optional toppings
- Bread: GF rolls alongside a classic loaf
- Dessert: Fruit crisp made with GF oats and DF butter, served with dairy-free vanilla frozen dessert



Set your table for success

Small hosting habits make a big difference. Label dishes clearly (GF, DF, Veg, contains nuts/soy), keep serving utensils dedicated to each dish, and leave original packaging nearby so guests can check ingredients. NOSH stocks pantry staples and ready-to-serve options that help you fill gaps without last-minute scrambling.

How to shop NOSH for the holidays

Bring your menu—or a rough idea—and ask the team to help you build a cart. You'll leave with the right swaps, plus a plan for timing (what to prep the day before, what to bake day-of). Inventory and selection vary, so consider a quick pre-visit call if you're searching for a specific product or flavor.



Smart swaps that don't feel like compromise

You don't need a brand-new cookbook to host well—just a few high-impact substitutions. At NOSH you'll find:

- Butter → plant-based butter for baking and sautéing
- Heavy cream → coconut cream or oat "cream" for sauces and soups
- Flour gravy → cornstarch or arrowroot as a thickener
- Breadcrumbs → gluten-free panko for toppings and meatloaf
- Pasta → lentil or chickpea pasta that holds up to hearty sauces
- Worcestershire (anchovy) → vegan Worcestershire for dressings and gravies
- Chicken stock → vegetable stock to keep sides shareable
- Cheese board → lactose-free or plant-based cheeses alongside classics

These swaps focus on flavor and function, so the dish tastes like the one everyone remembers—just more guests can enjoy it.

Host with confidence:
Find GF/DF/ Vegetarian
swaps at NOSH.

NOSH
Natural • Organic • Specialty • Healthful
Good Mood Food

Top 5 Drinks to Impress



Pomegranate Champagne Cocktail

A splash of pomegranate juice and jewel-like seeds in chilled champagne – elegant, festive, and perfect for toasts.

Caramel Apple Sangria

White wine, apple cider, sliced apples, and a cinnamon-sugar rim. Sweet, seasonal, and a guaranteed crowd-pleaser.



Mulled Wine

Simmer red wine with cloves, cinnamon, star anise, and orange peel. Serve warm in mugs with cinnamon stick stirrers for cozy flair.



Peppermint Hot Chocolate Bar

Rich hot cocoa with a toppings station – candy canes, whipped cream, marshmallows, and syrups.



Winter Citrus Spritz (Mocktail Option)

Sparkling water with blood orange juice, lemon, and elderflower syrup.



Garnish Like a Pro

Sugared Cranberries: Roll fresh cranberries in sugar for a frosty, jewel-like topper.

Rosemary Sprigs: A simple, fragrant stir stick that doubles as holiday greenery.

Citrus Wheels: Thinly sliced blood orange, lemon twists, or dried citrus wheels for a modern look.

Cinnamon Sticks: Perfect for mulled wine or cider – adds aroma and a festive stirrer.

Chocolate Drizzles & Candy Cane Crumbles: Rim mugs or martini glasses for peppermint mochas and hot cocoa.

Pomegranate Seeds: Jewel-like pops of color that sink and sparkle in bubbly drinks.

Rimmed Glasses: Dip rims in sugar, cinnamon sugar, or crushed candy canes to instantly “dress up” any pour.



Stay Safe This Holiday Season— Tips from **Hanford Insurance**

When the holidays get busy, safety is easy to overlook — but a few quick checks can prevent costly mishaps. Hanford Insurance encourages homeowners to take a moment before the season begins to prepare their homes and vehicles for colder weather.

- **Heating & Fire Safety:** Have your furnace and chimney inspected before heavy use. Keep space heaters clear of curtains, furniture, and holiday décor.
- **Electrical Safety:** Don't overload outlets or run cords under rugs. Check light strands for frayed wires before decorating.

- **Travel Safety:** Keep an emergency kit in your car and watch for slick roads as temperatures drop.
- **Candle Safety:** Keep candles on solid surfaces. Extinguish flames when leaving the room.
- **Insurance Checkup:** Review your home and auto coverage to make sure you're protected against winter damage or accidents.

A little planning can help everyone enjoy the holidays worry-free.



Did You Know?

The average homeowner is underinsured by 20% for fire and weather damage.

Prep Ahead **HOSTING TIMELINE**

Hosting during the holidays doesn't have to mean frantic, last-minute scrambling. With a little prep ahead of time, you can enjoy the party as much as your guests do. Here's a simple timeline — from one week out to the day-of — to keep you on track and feeling calm.

1 Week Out

- Finalize your guest list and menu.
- Shop for non-perishables, drinks, and décor.
- Set the table in your mind: gather serving dishes, trays, and utensils.
- Do a quick house refresh: tidy closets, stock the bathroom, and check linens.
- Start prepping anything you can freeze (soups, casseroles, cookie dough).

3 Days Out

- Grocery shop for fresh produce, dairy, and proteins.
- Clean and polish glassware, serving dishes, and utensils.
- Chop vegetables and refrigerate in airtight containers.
- Bake cookies or breads you can store.
- Touch up the main hosting spaces — vacuum, dust, and reset décor.

1 Day Out

- Set the table or arrange buffet stations.
- Lay out serving dishes and label them with sticky notes for easy flow.
- Chill beverages.
- Make dips, sauces, or desserts that hold overnight.
- Do a quick guest bathroom reset with fresh towels and soap.



Day-Of

- Cook or reheat your main dishes.
- Light candles or start a simmer pot for a welcoming scent.
- Put on your holiday playlist.
- Do a quick 10-minute tidy sweep in main spaces.
- Change into your hosting outfit before guests arrive — so you feel confident and ready.

Bonus: What to Freeze Ahead

Save time and stress by stocking the freezer with make-ahead favorites:

- Cookie dough (scoop into balls and freeze; bake straight from frozen).
- Casseroles (assemble, wrap tightly, freeze, then thaw in the fridge the night before).
- Soups and stews (freeze in labeled containers for quick reheating).
- Homemade rolls or breads (freeze after baking, then refresh in the oven).
- Appetizers like meatballs, pinwheels, or puff pastry bites (freeze before baking).

With a prep-ahead timeline, you can spend less time stressing in the kitchen and more time making memories with your guests. Holiday hosting really can feel effortless — when you plan smart.



Warm Spicy Mixed Nuts



Ingredients:

- 5 cups mixed nuts
- 2 tbsp Sweet Butter Olive Oil, alternative Persian Lime Olive Oil
- 3 tbsp Cajun Blend, alternative Chili Lime Blend
- 1 tbsp brown sugar

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Place nuts in a single layer on 2 rimmed backing sheets. Toast until nuts are golden and fragrant, 10 minutes. Rotate the sheets halfway through cooking. Transfer nuts to a large bowl.
2. Mix Cajun Blend and brown sugar in a small bowl.
3. Pour the Sweet Butter Olive Oil over the roasted nuts, coating well. Add the Cajun Blend and brown sugar mixture to the nuts and coat well.
4. Serve warm. These can be made 2 days in advance. Reheat in 300° F oven for 10 minutes.





Table Settings for Every Style



Classic

- Red, green, and gold palette
- Evergreen, holly, or poinsettia accents
- Taper candles in brass holders

Modern

- Monochrome palette (white, black, or gray)
- Clean-lined dishes with matte finishes
- Simple folded napkins or sleek napkin rings
- Geometric candleholders or frosted glass



Whimsical

- Bright pops of red, peppermint stripes, or candy cane accents
- Playful holiday-themed plates or mugs
- Festive napkin folds (like trees or stars)
- Place cards with ornaments or mini stockings



Glam

- Metallic accents
- Crystal glassware and chargers
- Satin or velvet napkins with jeweled napkin rings
- Candlelight and glittery touches

Organic

- Greens and neutrals with touches of gold
- Foraged greenery or eucalyptus as runners
- Stone or ceramic dinnerware
- Linen napkins in earthy tones

No-Oven Appetizers

When the holidays are in full swing, the last thing you need is one more dish taking up precious oven space. These no-bake appetizers are elegant, effortless, and sure to impress. Each one is festive enough for a holiday party, yet simple enough to assemble in minutes — no cooking required.



ANTIPASTO SKEWERS

Mini skewers layered with mozzarella, olives, cherry tomatoes, and salami, finished with a balsamic drizzle.

SMOKED SALON CUCUMBER ROUNDS

Cucumber slices topped with herbed cream cheese, smoked salmon, and a sprig of dill.

SHRIMP COCKTAIL SHOOTERS

Individual shot glasses with cocktail sauce, a chilled shrimp, and a lemon wedge.

CAPRESE SALAD CUPS

Tomato, mozzarella, and basil layered in small cups with olive oil and balsamic glaze.

MARINATED OLIVE & CHEESE MEDLEY

Herb-marinated olives paired with bite-sized cubes of cheese, served in mini bowls.

HUMMAS & VEGGIE TARTLETS

Phyllo cups or cucumber slices filled with hummus and topped with colorful veggies.

CHARCUTERIE CUPS

A personal grazing board in a glass: folded meats, cheese cubes, crackers, olives, grapes, and a rosemary sprig.



MAPLE SPICE RUBBED PORK ROAST



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INGREDIENTS

3-3 1/2 lbs pork shoulder
(aka pork butt)
2 tea mustard
2 T maple syrup
2 T sweet paprika
1 T sea/ kosher salt
1 T chili powder
1 T dry mustard
1 T garlic powder
1 T onion powder
1 tea black pepper
1/4 tea cayenne pepper
2 T chopped parsley or
chives for garnish, if desired

juice and zest of three juice
oranges
3 C fresh cranberries
3/4 C brown sugar

DIRECTIONS

For Pork:

1. Trim fat roast only if absolutely necessary (more than 1/2" on the bottom of roast)
2. Mix all other ingredients in a small dish until it forms a paste. Rub roast on all sides with paste. Wrap back up and leave in the fridge overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 350°. Wrap roast tightly in heavy foil, making sure the foil is folded tight with the seam on top of the roast so juices remain inside. Place wrapped roast on a rimmed cookie sheet or pan and place in oven for 10 minutes. Turn heat down to 225 degrees. Slow roast for 10 hours. Allow to rest for 15 minutes before unwrapping.
4. Slice meat and remove the fat layer from the bottom of meat. Arrange on a platter, spoon juices over pork then spoon on cranberry sauce. Garnish with parsley or chives if desired.

For Cranberry Sauce:

1. Place juice, zest, sugar and cranberries into a pan and bring to a simmer. Stir frequently. When cranberries begin to 'pop' simmer just a couple more minutes, turn off heat. Sauce will thicken even more after it cools.

Potluck Perfection

Potlucks take the pressure off a single host and transform a holiday gathering into a true community event. But without a little planning, they can turn into three green bean casseroles and no dessert. Here's how to make your next potluck a stress-free success.

Hosting a Potluck

- **Coordinate Early:** Create a shared sign-up list (Google Sheets, SignUpGenius, or a simple group text) so dishes are balanced.
- **Think Categories:** Encourage guests to pick from mains, sides, desserts, or drinks.
- **Provide Basics:** As the host, you cover the essentials—plates, cutlery, napkins, and drinks—to keep things seamless.

Potluck Picks

- **Appetizers:** Deviled eggs, antipasto skewers, veggie trays with dip, artisan bread and spreads
- **Mains & Sides:** Crockpot meatballs, cheesy potato casserole, pasta salads.
- **Desserts:** Brownie bites, cookies, or a festive trifle in a clear bowl.
- **Drinks:** A batch cocktail (like holiday punch) or sparkling cider for a festive, family-friendly option.

Guest Etiquette

- **Bring Enough to Share:** A good rule is enough for 8-10 servings.
- **Arrive Ready:** Choose dishes that travel well and don't require oven space upon arrival.
- **Label Clearly:** Add a small card noting the dish name and any allergens (nut-free, gluten-free, etc.).
- **Bring Your Own Serving Ware:** Don't make the host scramble for spoons and tongs.

Jazz it Up

- Use matching platters or table runners to unify the spread.
- Add garnish bowls (herbs, lemon wedges, sauces) so guests can dress up their plates.
- Add height and variety with cake stands, wooden crates, or risers under tablecloths.
- Create a "sweet corner" for desserts and coffee for a natural flow.

When everyone brings a little something, you get a feast filled with variety and love. A few ground rules and thoughtful presentation turn the humble potluck into a holiday tradition that feels festive, flavorful, and flawlessly hosted.

hvac & plumbing tips for hosts

01

MAKE SURE THERE'S
A PLUNGER AND
EXTRA TOILET PAPER
IN EACH BATHROOM.

02

FLUSHABLE
WIPEES AREN'T-
- TRASH THEM.

03

SET HEAT 1°-2°
COOLER BEFORE
GUESTS ARRIVE.

04

SET YOUR HVAC
FAN TO ON TO
KEEP AIR
MOVING ROOM-
TO-ROOM.

05

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HOST & GUESTS

Gifts

The holidays are full of gatherings, and with them comes the timeless tradition of gifting. From classic bottles of wine to creative take-home favors, a well-chosen gift shows gratitude, sparks joy, and leaves a lasting impression long after the party ends.



Classic & Crowd-Pleasing

- A Bottle of Wine or Sparkling Cider – Dress it up with a festive ribbon or paired with a set of wine charms.
- Seasonal Candle – Think evergreen, cinnamon, or cranberry scents for cozy holiday ambiance.
- Gourmet Chocolates – Small batch truffles or artisan bars wrapped in festive packaging.

Thoughtful & Personal

- Homemade Treats – Cookies, spiced nuts, or homemade jam in a decorative jar.
- Customized Ornament – A keepsake that captures the year or the family's name.
- Mini Plant or Herb Pot – Something that lasts beyond the holiday season.

Cozy & Comforting

- Coffee or Tea Sampler - A bundle of festive flavors like peppermint, chai, or holiday blends.
- Hot Cocoa Kit - Complete with marshmallows, candy canes, and a festive mug.
- Throw Blanket or Holiday Tea Towels - Seasonal but practical.

Luxe & Special Touches

- Olive Oil & Balsamic Set - A gourmet pairing perfect for food lovers.
- Cheese Board & Knife Set - Ideal for entertainers who love charcuterie.
- Spa Gift Bag - Mini lotions, hand cream, or bath salts for post-party relaxation.



For Guests to Take Home (as Favors)

- Mini Bottles of Prosecco or Sparkling Juice - With a custom "cheers" tag.
- Holiday Cookie or Treat Bag - Packaged in cellophane with a festive ribbon.
- Scented Sachets - Dried lavender, cinnamon, or pine cone blends.
- Photo Keepsake - A group Polaroid or instant photo in a small frame.

The best holiday gifts don't need to be extravagant – they're about showing appreciation and sending guests (or hosts) home with a little bit of cheer. Pair your pick with a handwritten note, and it instantly becomes unforgettable.

The Back-Up Plan

Because Something Always Goes Wrong...



Even the best-laid holiday plans can go sideways — here's how to save the day with style (and a smile).

- **Dish Disaster:** No worries — pile on extra sides, cheese and crackers, or order takeout and call it festive fusion.
- **Forgotten Ingredient:** Wing it with a substitute, or just own it as your “signature twist.”
- **Extra Guests:** Stretch the spread with salad, bread, or snacks — abundance is all about presentation.
- **Latecomers:** Plate a portion and keep the fun rolling — dinner waits for no one.
- **Broken Glass:** Quick sweep, fresh pour, and a toast to clumsy holiday cheer.
- **Power Outage:** Candlelight + cozy vibes = instant memory-making magic.



After all, what's a holiday without a little chaos? Just pour another drink, laugh it off, and call it tradition.

Party Recovery Mode

The guests have gone, the dishes are stacked, and your feet are reminding you how much work goes into throwing a holiday bash. Here's how to recover gracefully — and maybe even enjoy it.



Forget perfection. Do a quick sweep of trash, stack plates in the sink, and load one dishwasher run. The deep clean can wait — you've earned a break.



Start with a tall glass of water (or two) and your favorite pick-me-up — coffee, tea, or a smoothie. Hydration is your best friend after a long night of hosting.

Light a calming candle, put on soft music, or curl up with a cozy blanket. Resetting the atmosphere helps your house — and your mood — bounce back.



Turn leftovers into simple meals: turkey sandwiches, charcuterie snack boards, or reheat-and-relax soup. No need to cook again just yet.

Whether it's a long bath, a face mask, or an early bedtime, give yourself one small luxury to reward all that hard work.





*Cheers to a season full of good
food, great company, and
gatherings you'll treasure.*

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