

# THE *Dish* effortless ENTERTAINING®

DECEMBER 10, 2019

*Dinner with Friends is not a Performance ...  
It's a Gift of Friendship.*

Dear Friends,

Recently, Ed and I hosted a group of friends that gathers every Christmas. 🎄 I thought I would share a few thoughts from our dinner to inspire and equip you as you host family and friends during this joyous time!

Because I love to cook, hosting friends is an opportunity to do something I love. When I get to spend time in the kitchen, I get excited! Many of you feel the same way. Many of you don't. 😊 If you don't feel this way, I offer a few solutions. One option is to use this menu as a guide for everyone to bring something. You can also distribute the recipes giving your guests a chance to make something new. If hiring a caterer, you can give your caterer this menu as a guide. I've also provided the recipes to a caterer that I want prepared. Fred Bettin in Charlotte, Private Butler, [@flb55](#) on Instagram (also a very talented photographer) has made Beef Bourguignon and Amaretto Cheesecake for many of his clients ... including me! All the recipes, except the Mixed Green and Goat Cheese recipes, are in the book and/or in this week's EE "The Dish" on the [BLOG](#).



I also love setting a table — maybe you do, maybe you don't. I'm not nearly as creative as other friends like [@beavermama](#) or a great floral arranger like [@nanbwilliams](#). I don't let that I'm not as good as others get in my way. I want to make my guests feel special, but I don't worry about being judged.

Step 1 to *Effortless Entertaining* ...  
*"Dinner with Friends is not  
a Performance ...  
It's a Gift of Friendship."*

As many of you know, one of my mantras is, "Do what works for you!" This is the key to entertaining *effortlessly*.

Let me tell you what I don't like to do – decorate the Christmas tree. Ed doesn't like to do the lights either. Truth is – he never did! So, we hired Fred Bettin (yes, same as above) to do our tree. While Fred and Joe did the tree, I did my Advent wreath and other Christmas things I do enjoy! Win, Win, Win for Fred, Ed, and me! 🙌

At the risk of this unusually long newsletter going even longer ... I have a few more thoughts. Grab a cup of coffee or a glass (or two!) of wine. 🍷

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## MENU

Welcome Cocktail – French 75  
Salmon Tartare  
Tuscan Bean Dip  
Mixed Greens with Baked Goat Cheese  
Beef Bourguignon and Rice  
Seasoned Green Beans and Mixed Carrots  
Sour Cream Muffins  
Amaretto Cheesecake



Determine your menu in advance so you can plan and prepare, whether you're cooking or ordering from your favorite local sources. I'm using variations of this same menu for three gatherings this Christmas. I made all the Beef Bourguignon I needed at one time. There is another Beef Bourguignon Menu featured in the book with a GamePlan for the week.

For this menu, I wanted to serve the Salmon Tartare in a shot glass. I found these great [looking glasses at Crate and Barrel](#), \$1.95 each.

Another fun thing ... we asked our guests to bring a bottle of wine in a brown bag to share. We enjoyed a tasting before dinner and guests revealed and talked about the wines during dinner. 🍷 We loved hearing everyone's stories behind the wines they brought!

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If you're cooking, approach with organization and fun. Pull out everything you need – equipment and ingredients. As you see, I keep my measuring spoons and cups in mesh containers so I can pull them all out at one time. Prep bowls make it easy to prep all of your ingredients. Check your recipes to see if an ingredient is called for in more than one – prep that ingredient for all recipes at the same time. Make it fun by putting on some great music. *Alexa, play Michael Bublé Christmas!* If cooking during the day, enjoy a yummy hot tea or flavored coffee. If at night, maybe a glass of wine!





Set your table or trays a few days in advance. You can make sure you have everything you need and that everything is cleaned or polished. Although I use our silver all year, I especially love using it at Christmas - so beautiful and festive. If you're looking for silver, check out [@gryphonstatesilver](https://www.instagram.com/gryphonstatesilver) – an EE favorite!

<https://gryphonstatesilver.com>

Make ahead anything you can. For this dinner party menu, I prepared the Beef Bourguignon and Amaretto Cheesecake weeks in advance and froze. I prepared the Salmon Tartare, Tuscan Bean Dip, and Rice Blend earlier in the day. I also prepped everything needed for the rest of the menu. I still had plenty of time to organize my study 😊, prepare for an EE event, 🏃 go on a run with Putter 🏌️ (some walking was involved 😓), and welcome my overnight guests.



Step 10 to Effortless Entertaining ...

*“Enjoy! – If you're not enjoying your party, no one else is either!”*

Sending lots of Christmas love,

*Dee Dee*

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DeeDee Dalrymple

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