

A house full ... *effortlessly!*

THE *Dish*

effortless
ENTERTAINING®

August 24, 2021



Dear Friends,

After taking a few weeks off to revel in our daughter's wedding, I'm back in the saddle and excited to share a few helpful hints! For two weeks before Elizabeth and Alex's wedding, our family enjoyed time together at home ... we were a happy house full! To be extra safe, we quarantined in the days leading up to the wedding, which meant we enjoyed every meal at home. As summer comes to an end, maybe you're preparing to enjoy family and friends for Labor Day or a summer's last hoorah. I am sharing a few tips to make sure time with family and friends is super easy and fun!



Wreath by good friend, Hester Hodde.

My first tip ...

Plan ahead and stock up early and abundantly with prepared foods. Weeks prior to the wedding I made my grocery list and purchased all the nonperishables. As many of you know, breakfasts are always DIY. The frig was stocked with eggs, fruit, avocados, etc. Lunches were DIY too. It's also a good idea to stock up on plenty of snacks and nibbles. I like to designate a drawer or basket where everyone can help themselves with a grab-and-go snack. For dinner, we kept it simple, and fortunately, everyone took turns cooking. Earlier in the summer, Ed and I marinated steaks, pork chops, and chicken, and put them in the freezer for quick and easy dinners. We added a few "gourmet to go" items from a local home-cooked source.

My second tip ...

Plan ahead and stock the bar abundantly. We never needed to run to the grocery or liquor store for anything. Better to have leftovers than to run out! Fortunately for me, Ed covered everything needed for the bar. He also bought a cool ice chest for the porch. That, along with our favorite beverage tub, were the foundations of our self-serve perennial bar. Keeping all the canned beer, seltzers, etc., in the ice chest also frees up room in the frig.

My third tip ...

Say, "Yes!" when others offer to help and also arrange for extra help. The myth is that we must do everything ourselves – not so! Once our wedding festivities began, we had someone serving when needed for drop-ins, picking up, and fluffing. Because we didn't hire a wedding planner, we hired a personal assistant, [Lori Lucente](#), to oversee all the details beyond everything our wonderful club handled. Family and friends also offered to help, and we said, "Yes!" In addition to friends who hosted beautiful parties and luncheons, we said yes to Bloody Marys for the Wedding Party Field Day, to family meals, lunch at home, for the bridesmaids, flowers in our home, and to my sister's homemade biscotti. I simply could not do everything, and I could not do everything as well as they did. When I think of all our family and friends did for us, I get a little weepy as I am truly overwhelmingly grateful for the outpouring. Family and friends like to help – say "Yes!"

Whether it's something as extravagant as your daughter's wedding or something a little more simple like a weekend at the beach, I hope these tips will serve you well as you

... open your home, open your heart, and give the gift of hospitality.

From our home to yours,



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Flowers by Maison Heistand, Millefleurs, with flowers from her garden!
Maison also did all the wedding flowers!



Getaway Golf Cart and Flowers by good friend Donna Lawhon.



Leslie and JR's perfect Bloody Mary bar!

SOURCES & RESOURCES



Cooler Cart
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