

How to graciously handle your guests' dietary concerns!

THE *Dish* *effortless* ENTERTAINING®

September 15, 2021

“I have learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

MAYA ANGELOU

Dear Friends,

Who knew?! National Celiac Awareness Day was Monday. Now, why in the world would Ms. EE be talking about this? Because a question I hear a lot is ...

“How do we handle dietary issues when hosting a dinner party?”

It does seem we are in a new era when many have dietary preferences, concerns, or restrictions. What to do?!



What day is National Celiac Day?

National Celiac Disease Awareness Day
— September 13, 2021 —

National Celiac Disease Awareness Day, every September 13, is a good time to examine this little-known disease that affects about 3 million Americans.

My personal strategies and thoughts ...

My first tip ...

I recommend asking guests if there are any dietary issues. Recently for a bridesmaids luncheon, one of our guests could not consume dairy. Given that I was serving the Spinach and Ricotta Pie – a dish loaded with cheese – I served her a different entree. In addition to dietary restrictions such as this, there are also dietary preferences such as guests who don't eat seafood, pork, or meat of any kind. As a host, I choose to ask especially for seated dinner parties. For larger gatherings – cocktail buffets, for example – there are typically enough choices for all concerned so asking is not necessary.

My second tip ...

I adjust my menu to accommodate the dietary concerns, but I may not modify my entire menu. For example, if I want to serve salmon, but have a guest who doesn't eat seafood, I may also serve tenderloin. If I have a vegetarian guest, I may still serve meat to my other guests, but make sure I serve a vegetarian entree. If I have a guest who is celiac or gluten intolerant, I may still serve the Sour Cream Muffins. I will, however, choose a dessert that is gluten-free. If you feel you can't safely accommodate someone with extensive needs, I think it's appropriate to discuss if they would prefer to bring their meal. I know this sounds crazy, but truly one of our guests who is severely celiac offered to bring her meal. What a lovely gesture.

My third tip ...

Finally, a note to guests. Try to be considerate of your hosts. Dietary preferences and restrictions are two different things. I prefer to avoid gluten, but it is not a restriction like it is for those who are truly celiac. For this reason, I never raise this as an issue with a host. Ed doesn't eat lamb because he doesn't like it, but I never mention it unless specifically asked if there is anything we don't eat. Once when asked, our host who was planning to serve lamb, simply had Ed bring a ribeye and we were delighted! Try to be thoughtful in the issues that you mention to your host.

The bottom line is I want my guests to feel comfortable and I want to avoid any awkward moments for because someone can't eat what I am serving. More than anything, I want my guests to enjoy our evening together. See the quote above.

A little effort on my part will create an *effortlessly* enjoyable time for all!

From our home to yours,

DeeDee

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