


NEW HOMES & CONDOS

Your complete guide to holiday entertaining



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**LIVING IN
STYLE**

The holidays are just around the corner and you're thinking about hosting a party. This is the time of year that is all about entertaining and decorating in our homes.

Create flow

You want your home to be the place to be invited to, full of decorations and of course your friends and loved ones, enjoying the libations and feasts of the season. So how are you going to pull it off?? Here are some of my tips for getting your house ready for the holiday festive season.

- Remove furniture so that people can mingle without bumping into a coffee table or chairs. A full room of people standing is better than a room full of people sitting on all the furniture pushed against the walls.

- Create small seasonal

vignettes like on your mantel or coffee table, but ensuring you have enough room to place a glass or plate.

- Light season appropriate scented candles for the powder room and other areas of your home. Make sure you keep them in places away from food stations.

- Invest in a rolling rack to hang your guest's coats in either a bedroom or back hallway. It's not so chic to have them piled up on your bed. You can use this as a drying rack for your laundry that needs to hang dry.

Keep it moving

With your party room ready, Christmas tree decorated and your stockings hung one by one, you have one last apprehensive thought. You have just renovated and had your brand new kitchen designed and

installed just in time for the holidays but the last thing you want is the dreaded "kitchen" party. Follow these tips for joyful party that moves to party to where it should be.

- Set up a "buffet" in several areas of your home if you are having a large party. If it's a smaller party, place food on a side buffet rather than dining table. This will free up the flat surface space if some one would actually like to sit at the dining table.

- Hire a bartender or wait staff to let you and your guests enjoy each other's company and keep them out of the kitchen. Otherwise, keep the booze out of the kitchen with a separate area away from the food station, with all the accouterments and mixers; ice, water, sodas seltzers, lemons limes. Or you may opt for a premixed cocktail in a punch bowl or decorative pitcher.

- Only serve white. NO red wines, tomato sauces. Spills and drips are bound to happen, but you can reduce this by controlling what you serve and not having your guests eat in the kitchen. Leave the red to Santa's suit!

- Serve food that doesn't require cutlery. Serve it on small little plates that have a Christmas theme to them. You can also rent small white plates so you never run out. Nothing like doing the dishes while your company is waiting to taste your delicious cuisine.

Stocking up

Here are a few additional ideas and things to have on hand in your home prior to your holiday celebrations.

- A durable and large enough entry carpet that will absorb melting snow.

- Rent extra plates and glassware. It's a small price to pay but you won't be left with a broken set of wine glasses if a couple break.

- If you have an ottoman as a coffee table, remove the tray or flat surface from it to add extra seating, if necessary.

Have an assortment of serving trays

- Colourful Napkins

Festive touches

Beyond the tree, festive touches that are quick affordable decorating options

- Scented candles



Set up a buffet in different areas of your home if you are having a large party; place food on a side buffet if it's a smaller party.

- Spruce bows as floral arrangements rather than a tree

- Mercury glass candle votives add a lot of sparkle to a room.

- Colourful paper napkins in the bathroom are a nice touch.

Merry Christmas to all and may your New Year be filled with health and happiness!

— Paul Semkuley is principal of Re:Source Lifestyle, a Toronto-based interior design firm. Visit him at www.resource-lifestyles.com.



Create small seasonal vignettes on your mantel or coffee table but do leave enough room to place a glass or plate.



Beyond the tree, festive touches can include scented candles, spruce bows as floral arrangements and glass candle votives.