

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

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Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

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Snuff Out Holiday Entertaining Stress

By Kara Navolio



Holiday entertaining can be elegant or eclectic, and let friends bring food to the party.



Photos provided

It seems as if we just weathered Thanksgiving, and now it's time to do it all again: dress up the house, don our finest clothes and best behavior, and plan for those Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year's celebrations.

Certainly the Holidays mean looking forward to spending time with our families; but they also bring stress like no other time of the year. Not only is it the stress of entertaining, but also in those interpersonal relationships with family members —

you know the ones — with whom you may not see eye to eye. Sometimes even the best of friends or family members may snap under the pressure of a Santa-sized bag of expectations.

Here are some sure-fire ways to reduce stress so you can enjoy holiday entertaining:

1. Pre-planning. "Planning is essential; the earlier, the better," says Margie Reyerson, an Orinda-based marriage and family therapist. Thinking ahead and making lists can reduce stress. By writ-

ing it all down you can release some of the thoughts that keep you from relaxing and sleeping.

That pre-planning is essential if you are entertaining or hosting events in your home, says Lisa Cecconi, brand manager for Lafayette's Misto Lino. "I sometimes like to take a day off work when I can, just to focus on buying groceries when no one else is shopping."

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