

Snuff Out Holiday Entertaining Stress

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2. Simplify. “It’s important to remember that the purpose of the holidays is the joy, the celebration, and family time,” Reyerson says.

Consider using beautiful paper products instead of china to simplify clean-up. Or maybe you can use paper plates just for dessert and simple table decorations. “I like to decorate with things from nature for the Holiday table,” adds June Santoro of Misto Lino. “Things you have in your own yard, like fall leaves, branches, acorns, lemons all arranged on a simple table runner with votive candles interspersed.”

3. Set a tone of serenity. Reyerson suggests lighting candles all around your home. You can add music that is calming too. If your family enjoys football, try to negotiate in advance which one game you will watch, modeling moderation and family time for the

children. Keep electronics and TVs off during meals and present opening.

4. Get outside. If you are hosting, try to get in a walk or some exercise in the morning before guests arrive, or before the madness of digging beneath the Christmas tree.

5. Set tables in advance. If you are hosting a brunch or dinner, Santoro suggests getting the table ready two days in advance. This gives you the time to make sure your infrequently used dishes and glasses are clean and eliminates another chore on the day of the event.

Cecconi agrees — it goes back to that early preparation thing. “The less you have to do right before an event, the better.”

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Happy Holidays!



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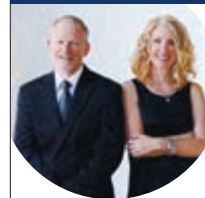
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