



DAY BEFORE *Tasks*

- ☐ **Do a final cleaning of your house the day before.** Major housecleaning on the day of a party is stressful and interferes with your preparation (and mood!).
- ☐ **Dust your tables and floors** before you set up your [serving? dining?] table.
- ☐ **Think through how many guests you expect**, and then plan the seating and backup seating.
- ☐ **Set out your serving platters** according to your food presentation preferences. Place notes indicating what food goes where to make party setup a breeze. Make sure your appetizers will fit on the plates you have!
- ☐ **Set up simple, decorative embellishments** for the food and tables, gather pretty spoons and forks for serving, and place food labels with the serving dishes. Place napkins in convenient locations.
- ☐ **Are you serving anything that needs to be thawed?** Be sure to keep a simple gathering notepad with reminders, or set a timer for anything that requires removal from the freezer or fridge.
- ☐ **Set out drink charms, dry erase markers or homemade labels** for your guests' drinks. Everyone can then keep track of their own drink, and they won't need to keep reaching for a new glass.
- ☐ **Do a pre-party walk-through.** Pretend you're a guest coming into your home. Is the setup welcoming? Is there a spot to hang your coat or set down your purse? Is the bathroom clean and stocked with essentials?

DAY OF *Helps*

- ☐ **Open the windows wide** and let fresh air blow through your home the morning of the party. (Be sparing with scented candles that could aggravate guests' allergies.)
- ☐ Be sure special welcoming touches—**flowers, signs, welcome and goodbye stations**—are in place and set up with everything you need.
- ☐ Start your get-together on a satisfying note. Set a **variety of appetizers and drinks** on the tables or at the welcome station just prior to your guests' arrival.
- ☐ If you want to protect tables, have **coasters or small napkins** available for guests to use.
- ☐ **Turn your cell phone ringer on high and vibrate** in the hours leading up to and at the start of the party in case a guest tries to reach you. If you used a Facebook event to invite guests, check online in case anyone leaves an updated RSVP or is in need of directions.
- ☐ **Do a quick review of the house to make sure everything is in place.** Have you tidied up sufficiently? Does the front porch need a quick sweep? Are the food and drinks ready to go? Don't look too closely. A general assessment is all you need.