

**CAFE CORTINA**

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 PANEL OF EXPERTS



## WHAT ARE THE SECRETS TO A SUCCESSFUL, COZY HOLIDAY PARTY FOR 25 IN A RESTAURANT?

Holiday entertaining can be done with less stress by practicing simple planning and by being organized. Follow these tips:

- To create a cozy atmosphere for a 25-person dinner, a small restaurant is ideal.
- Talk to the restaurant's planner, and let them know what you are trying to accomplish, such as a relaxed, convivial evening of enjoyment for friends.



- Focus on your guests: Invite your closest friends and family. Introduce those who don't already know each other, and share a few points of interest among them to break the ice. You'll have a great time if you know that your guests are enjoying themselves and each other.
- Plan an interesting multiple-course "small tastings" dinner.
- Select a few good-value wines to pair with the tastings. Make it clear with the restaurant's planner that the restaurant does not push alcohol on your guests. Request that the wait staff ask guests before pouring.
- Don't forget about your guests' dietary needs, such as vegetarians or vegans, and make sure the restaurant is well prepared to accommodate them with dishes of the same quality as the other foods.
- Remember that the party is for your guests. Make it memorable; talk and listen to all your guests. Share their stories, as well as yours.
- Give guests a small memento to take home, so they remember their special 2010 holiday evening together. If children are present, place a special age-appropriate gift for them at their setting. They always will remember your thoughtfulness and so will their parents.