

Entertaining Ideas

Tips That Brighten Your Dinner Bash

(NAPSA)—There's nothing like a meal with friends to brighten your mood, and a few easy tips can help you be the ideal host:

- **Set the mood with music.**

Have upbeat music playing when guests arrive to stimulate conversation and choose music that fits the time of year or theme of the party. Creating a CD or a playlist to last throughout the evening ensures you can spend less time being the DJ and more time enjoying your guests. You can also hand out copies of the CD at the end of the evening as a memorable party favor.

- **Let the lighting do the work.** To make sure you and your guests shine the right way, avoid harsh overhead lighting that may spoil the party's ambience. Aim for soft and flattering light throughout the party by using a few different sources—table and floor lamps are quick and easy to rearrange.

- **Dress the table.** Let your personality show through with inviting and unique tabletop accents. Look for a bright spool of ribbon and tie your napkins up in bows. For a sparkling centerpiece, use a LED-lighted table runner—when fully charged, the Sylvania LED Lighted Fabric Table Runner lasts for 10 hours and can accent dinner and glassware. For more information, visit www.Sylvania.com. Or, be creative with name cards by using



A LED-lighted fabric table runner can create a sparkling centerpiece.

personality traits instead of names and let your guests pick their seats.

- **Make menu-planning a cinch.** Selecting a theme for the menu will help narrow down the potential dishes and allow the menu to easily fall into place. Choose dishes that can be largely prepared ahead of time so you can get the washing, peeling and chopping out of the way and be able to greet your guests at the door. Quick cleanup and preparation tips include washing items as you use them and setting out serving dishes and platters ahead of time. These simple tips can help your next gathering shine.

- **Treat your guests.** Encourage your guests to relax and feel at home. Forego a formal dessert by setting up a sundae bar where guests can indulge in their favorite toppings. Also consider playing a board game to keep the festivities going.