

Holiday Help

Party Planning Made Easy

(NAPSA)—’Tis the season to be jolly, and while it sometimes seems easiest to skip the holiday party scene altogether, some things are worth the effort—and seasonal soirees are definitely one of them!

Party-planning sites, such as Evite.com—the leading social event-planning service on the Web—help millions of hosts plan successful events each year.

“You don’t need a big budget to host a great party, and running yourself ragged over details isn’t necessary either,” said Jessica Landy Raymond, Evite’s party-planning and trend expert. “You just need a little thoughtful planning.”

Evite recommends these top tips to enhance your holiday bash:

- **Plan ahead**—The holidays are a busy time, so send out your invitations two to three weeks in advance.

- **Create a checklist**—Be sure everything gets done on time with a comprehensive to-do list that includes everything from determining an overall budget to choosing the perfect venue and making a guest list. For tips and sample checklists, check out Evite’s Party Checklist.

- **Choose a great theme**—Add cool, seasonal style to your holiday soiree with a theme such as “Winter Wonderland” or “It’s a Wonderful Life.” Incorporate the theme into invitations, decorations, food, activities and music to tie together all the party pieces.

- **Make the most of your menu**—Let the party theme inspire your menu and beverages. Try a peppermintini with crushed candy canes, iced hot chocolate or angel food cake to get guests in the holiday spirit.

If you’re attending holiday par-



Using tips from a party-planning Web site can help a host plan a memorable event.

ties and not hosting, unwrap these simple gift-giving tips and hostess gifts with the mostest from Evite’s etiquette experts:

“My mother taught me to always bring a gift for the host,” said Landy Raymond. “It’s a simple way to say thank you for the invitation.”

- Try not to bring something the host must attend to right away. If you bring flowers, pre-arrange them in a vase.

- Avoid bringing food unless asked, as the host has probably planned out the menu.

- Tailor the gift to the host’s interests—a small, elegant frame for an amateur photographer or a bottle of 20-year-old balsamic vinegar for a foodie.

- Simple gifts that are personalized can be great. A monogrammed apron, photo coasters or wine charms with photos of you and the host are very thoughtful gifts.

For a one-stop site for party planning and hostess gift ideas, visit Evite (www.evite.com) where you can find everything needed to host or attend a great event, including party theme ideas, free online invitations, planning checklists and hostess gifts ideas.