

Holiday Entertaining

Easy Ideas For A Hassle-Free Holiday Season

(NAPSA)—Did you know the average Thanksgiving meal takes more than 12 hours to prepare and cook—and that doesn't even include clean up! This year, look to timesaving tools that alleviate stress and make planning (and enjoying) the holidays a breeze.

Long known for keeping food fresh longer, vacuum packaging appliances like FoodSaver are a great one-stop holiday helper. These simple suggestions will ease holiday prep work and finally leave you feeling in control.

Sidestep Last-Minute Meal Preparation

Side dishes are easily prepared, cooked in advance and then frozen until you're ready to use them. By vacuum packaging, you protect against freezer burn so, when reheated, food truly tastes as if you just prepared it. To reheat, simply simmer on the stovetop or zap in the microwave.

Cut Down on Cleanup

Another great benefit of preparing meals in advance is the minimal cleanup (translation: less time in the kitchen) on the day of the feast. When foods are reheated in vacuum packaged bags, you eliminate sticky pots and pans, freeing you up from post-meal kitchen duty.

Get A Jump Start On Holiday Baking

Portion out dry ingredients and vacuum package in bags or canisters. When it's time to bake, simply add remaining ingredients, bake and enjoy. Or, if getting everything done all at once is a priority, vacuum package the final product. Controlled operation keeps delicate goodies crush-free in canisters or bags. When it's time to pull those treats out, they will be as fresh as the day they were made.

Silver Bells

Polishing the silver doesn't have to be a holiday tradition. Tackle this task at another time of the year when you're not already overwhelmed with holiday to-dos. Store polished silver in a vacuum packaged bag to eliminate the oxygen that causes it to tarnish. Now your silver will be shining bright all year long. And when it comes time, setting a beautiful holiday table will be a snap.

Holiday Meal Appeal

Below, longtime FoodSaver



Art Smith

fan Art Smith shares one of his tried- and-true holiday recipes from his latest book, "Kitchen Life: Real Food for Real Families — Even Yours!" This dish is easily

prepared in advance and simply reheated in simmering water, in the microwave or in the oven. "Keeping pace in today's hectic world, especially during the holidays, can be a challenge. I look for kitchen tools that maximize efficiency and allow me to spend more time enjoying the meal and the company of those around me."

Polka Dot Mashed Potatoes

- 2 lbs. Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 2-inch chunks**
- 2 large garlic cloves**
- 1 10-ounce box frozen petite green peas, thawed**
- 2 T. unsalted butter**
- ½ cup well-shaken buttermilk, microwaved**



JOIN THE PARTY—Side dishes can be prepared and cooked in advance and then frozen until use.

- on high for about 20 seconds to lose its chill**
- ½ cup (2 ounces) freshly grated Parmesan cheese**
- 2 T. finely chopped fresh chives, mint or scallion greens**
- Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste**

Place the potatoes and garlic in a large saucepan and add enough lightly salted water to cover the potatoes by 1 inch. Bring to a boil over high heat. Cook, partially covered, until tender, about 25 minutes. During the last minute or so, add the peas. Drain well and return to the pot.

Add the butter to the pot. Using a potato masher or handheld electric mixer, mash the vegetables, adding enough buttermilk to reach the desired consistency. Stir in the Parmesan and chives. Season with salt and pepper.

Transfer to a vacuum packaging bag, seal and freeze until ready to reheat and use.

For more information on FoodSaver and for specific reheating instructions, visit www.foodsaver.com.