HOST THOUGHTFULLY 003

A Plate Every Guest Can Enjoy



ASK FIRST. PLATE THOUGHTFULLY.

Before choosing the menu, ask about food allergies, dietary restrictions and ingredients guests particularly dislike. A carefully plated dinner should be something each person can comfortably enjoy.

1 Ask before choosing the menu

Ask: ‘Do you have any food allergies or foods you really do not enjoy?’ Plan suitable ingredients without asking guests to choose their portion sizes.

Why: Learning this early lets you design the complete plate rather than improvise an alternative at service.

2 Check the entire plate

Review the main, plated sides, cooking oil, sauce and garnish. Keep ingredient packaging available and check labels instead of relying on memory.

Why: An ingredient can be present in a dressing or marinade without being visible on the plate.

3 Give alternatives equal care

When a different component is needed, plan its sauce, sides and finish too. Keep the presentation as thoughtful as the other plates.

Why: A guest's alternative should feel like a complete dinner, not an ingredient removed at the last moment.

FROM MY KITCHEN

A dislike worth remembering

A friend of mine does not like sesame oil, so I try to avoid it when cooking for them. I check the dressing, marinade and sauce as well as the main ingredient.

Keep the plate coherent

When practical, I adjust the dish for everyone so each guest receives the same carefully considered presentation.

Treat allergies separately

Discuss preparation and cross-contact directly with the guest. Shared utensils and surfaces can transfer allergens. Removing an allergen from a finished plate is not enough, and cooking does not reliably eliminate it.

Confirm what you can accommodate

Be candid about your kitchen and ingredients. Make arrangements privately so nobody needs to explain their needs to the whole table.

THE PLATING MINDSET

Plan a plate the guest can enjoy, with the same attention to balance, portioning and presentation as every other serving.