HOST THOUGHTFULLY 046

Put Leftovers Away Before Dessert



MAKE THE NEXT MEAL PART OF THE DINNER PLAN.

After the main course, put suitable leftovers into covered, shallow containers and refrigerate them promptly. Make this a brief planned step before settling in for dessert.

1 Have containers ready

Choose clean shallow containers before dinner. Divide suitable remaining food into small meal-sized portions.

Why: The storage step is easier when you do not need to find containers and matching lids.

2 Refrigerate promptly

Do not wait for food to cool on the counter. Small amounts of hot food can go directly into the refrigerator in shallow containers.

Why: Prompt storage keeps the leftovers from waiting through dessert and a long conversation.

3 Count the full time out

Refrigerate perishables within 2 hours, or within 1 hour above 90 F. Count total time outside proper hot or cold holding.

Why: Clearing dinner does not restart the food's time limit.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Build a later meal

Arrange a useful portion of the main and accompaniments together when appropriate, then cover and refrigerate.

Use shallow portions

Divide a large amount rather than storing it in one deep pot. Choose containers that fit the remaining food.

Label what you saved

Add the food name and date. Use refrigerated leftovers within 3 to 4 days, or freeze for longer storage.

Then enjoy dessert

Once the food is stored, return to your guests. You do not need to finish washing the dishes first.

THE PLATING MINDSET

Store suitable leftovers promptly in covered, shallow portions, then return to the evening with the next meal already planned.