

On How to Find Time to Enjoy the Holidays

The cheeriest family and friend centered days of the year are coming — Christmas, New Year's Eve and Day. Visiting and entertaining, special foods, decorations and thoughtful gifts weave memories to enjoy long after the holidays.

Often homemakers find themselves too harried, rushed and tired to really capture the joy of this bright season. Some people never quite get organized and go through the season in a haze.

Others plan ahead but put off acting and then have to abandon some good ideas for lack of time.

Then there are those who appear to turn out delectable dishes and decorations, enjoy every bit of company, conversation, children's activities and manage to look radiant and relaxed.

How do they do it? The trick, according to Miss June Wilke, Extension Home Economist, is to think Christmas long before the spirit of the season is at hand. There is so much that can be done well in advance. Spreading out the necessities will keep you busy, but not nearly so rushed as the procrastinator.

Get through the planning stage right now, Miss Wilke advises. Make a calendar sheet for December with large blocks for each day. Then write in all the "things to do." Such work sheets help to keep the schedule of cleaning, cooking, shopping, card writing and decorating rolling smoothly.

Decide what parties and activities will be part of your family's celebrating. Except for the actual holidays themselves, the exact dates can be tentative. Check recipes and plan menus for these events. Look for some do-ahead-and-freeze ideas to lighten party day kitchen duties.

Also pencil in one or two "bulk" cooking days when you can cook a number of meal mainstays in advance.

This "pantry" will provide

Farm Women Calendar

Saturday, December 4

12:30 p.m. — Farm Women Society 10, Christmas luncheon, home of Mrs. Charles Stauffer, Lime Spring Farm, Rohrerstown

2 p.m. — Farm Women Society 8 meeting.

2:30 p.m. — Farm Women Society 1, Christmas program, Moravian Church Home, Lititz

6:30 p.m. — Farm Women Society 6, Christmas party, Rheems Fire Hall

Wednesday, December 6

6:30 p.m. — Farm Women Society 14, Christmas banquet, People's Restaurant, New Holland

Lancaster County Farm Women executive meeting, home of Mrs. John Hess, Columbia RD2

Thursday, December 9

7:30 p.m. — Farm Women Society 26, home of Mrs. Howard Sipling, Marietta RD1

Farm Women Society 21, Christmas party, Meadow Hills Dining House

Farm Women Society 28, home of Mrs. Harry Landis, 2120 Lyndell Drive, Lancaster

Friday, December 10

6:30 p.m. — Farm Women Society 9, Christmas party, West Willow Fire Hall

Saturday, December 11

6:30 p.m. — Farm Women Society 13, family Christmas party, Ronks Fire Hall

6:30 p.m. — Farm Women Society 25, home of Mrs. Chester Eshleman, Willow Street RD1

interesting but quick dinners for shopping, decoration and card writing days when time runs short. Collective cooking has other advantages. It is time saving.

While the ingredients and cookware are out for several dishes creating a multitude of meals, but requiring just one major cleanup.

Also, with much cooking done, there will be less last minute mess so appliances and floor can be washed a few days before guest time.

With menus set, it is easy to decide what serving pieces will be needed. These can be culled for polishing and washing along with good china, silver and crystal and set aside in protective wrapping for the first holiday event. Organizing menus and recipes well ahead allows you to plan one or two big grocery shopping trips for staple and nonperishable items.

Make a gift shopping list early with names, sizes and tentative presents or general categories. Keep a copy of the list with you to take advantage of store features or hard-to-find discoveries while shopping in general.

Shop by mail early; remember which gifts must be sent to far away places. The post office urges early mailing of gift packages to insure Christmas delivery.

There will no doubt be a few odds and ends to buy as Christmas nears. If much is done

ahead, however, you can enjoy the festivities of street corner Santas, the sound of caroling and the store decorations.

Another early bird helper is bringing the Christmas card list up to date and purchasing cards. Write addresses in odd moments and save the pleasure of personal greeting notes for closer to the holiday.

Some cleaning chores need to be done at the last moment — sometimes even between occasions. For example, weather and company may combine to necessitate washing entryway rugs for Thanksgiving Day and again soon after. Make note of these special cleaning areas to work into daily or weekly rounds.

However, most heavy duty holiday cleaning can be done right now. It's a good idea, especially if there are children at home, to leave the most used room for last.

Work through the house room by room. Wash curtains, spreads, slipcovers. Shampoo upholstery and do a major even-the-legs furniture washing and polishing. Clean rugs and wall areas, wash windows, mirrors and picture frame glass. Sort old toys and clothing, throwing out the useless and arranging to give "out grown" toys and garments in good condition to a charitable group for distribution to needy families.

With major cleaning out of the way, you can exist happily through the holidays with a simple maintenance program.

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