Written by Jill Kerr Tepe Tuesday, 15 November 2011 21:06 - Last Updated Thursday, 16 October 2014 13:36

My favorite holiday tradition has become my annual Christmas wine tasting dinner.



What better way to usher in the season than an early December feast to celebrate the subtleties of wine, the bounty of delicious food, the camaraderie of dear friends, and the blessings of this past year? My husband and I provide the 7 course meal, and we assign our friends to bring a

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wine varietal to accompany each course. It's a fabulous formal evening enjoyed by all.

With a fair amount of planning and some creative enthusiasm, you too can create an intimate, memorable gathering among your own circle. Outlined below are a few tips for designing your own formal Christmas wine tasting dinner.



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Designate a date at least 6 weeks ahead of time. I choose the first or second Friday in December. It seems to be best for booking my friends as holiday schedules fill up quickly and Saturdays seem to be the most popular.

Choose 10-16 guests to keep your table intimate. I have several groups of friends that I spend time with, but this dinner is tradition with one particular sect. But just because you invited someone the year before doesn't mean you have to again. Your gathering should consist of people that you see often and also enjoy wine. Select your guests and confirm them for your date via email. You will need a head count before sending out the final invitation with wine assignments.

Pick a color theme for the year. I revel in varying the colors and I change out my decorations to match. Everything must follow this theme: Invitations, Menus, Wine Assignment Cards, Tablecloths, Napkins, Lighting, Chair Covers.

Budget tip: choose one color scheme that you can freshen every year for a slightly different look.

Choose 8 wines for the 7-course meal.

1st course - Standing - Meet & Greet Hour - Sparkling Wine and cheeses

2nd course - Seated - 1st appetizer - Red Wine of Your Choice and a small serving to complement it

3rd course - Seated - 2nd appetizer - White Wine of Your Choice and a small serving to complement it

4th course - Seated - 3rd appetizer - Red Wine of Your Choice and a small serving to complement it

5th course - Seated - Salad or Soup - White Wine of Your Choice and a small serving to complement it

6th course - Seated - Main Course - Red & White wine to complement the main course

7th course - Seated - Dessert - Dessert wine or sparkling of your choice and dessert



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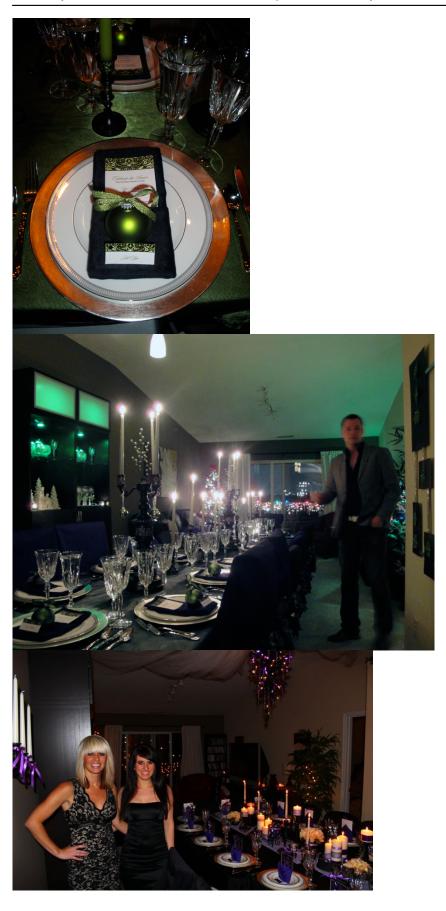








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