



Suggested Guidelines for Hosting the Progressive Dinner

The Progressive Dinner is an annual CCA event that is typically held in May each year. One couple agrees to host the first segment and serves appetizers; a second couple hosts the entrée portion of the meal, and a third couple hosts the dessert portion which also includes a simple form of entertainment or time for socializing. To ensure a successful evening, we are offering some guidelines developed by previous Progressive Dinner Hosts.

1. Volunteering to host.

Decide how the three segments will be divided among volunteers. Options include sharing one of the segments between 2 couples. This can be especially helpful to the couple hosting the entrée portion. Choose a date that works for the host couples. The event usually takes place in early May so that the weather might permit utilizing patios and outdoor seating. It is advisable to avoid the weekend of Memorial Day. Once a date has been chosen, confirm the date with the Activities Chair.

2. Choose the menu.

Many times hosts find it helpful to choose a central theme (Italian, Mexican, BBQ, etc) and build a menu around this. Once a theme has been selected, each host should decide on the specific items to be served and costs should be approximated based on food, beverages, and associated supplies. Usually, the hosts include water and several non-alcoholic options (soda, lemonade, coffee, etc). It is up to the hosts to determine if beer, wine or alcoholic punch will be included, and if so, this should be factored in to the estimated cost of each segment. If the hosts prefer, the event can be set up as a BYOB and each person attending will be responsible for bringing his/her own alcoholic beverages.

3. Timing for each segment.

The appetizer portion usually begins about 5 or 5:30 and lasts about an hour. This can vary based on the amount of driving time between each house. The dinner portion should begin by 6:30 or 7:00 and lasts about 60-90 minutes. The dessert option should start about 8:00 or 8:30.

4. Pricing the event.

The Progressive Dinner is designed to be self-funded. Hosts will determine individual costs for each portion of the meal, and the cost to participants will reflect the total. Hosts should approximate the cost as closely as possible so there is little to no out-of-pocket expense for each host. Money is typically collected from the participants at the first house but can be collected in advance if desired. Typically, this is a well-attended event and hosts can plan on approximately 30-35 attendees if space permits. If the hosts of the main course portion have limited space available, the event can be limited to a finite number of attendees on a first-come, first-served basis.

5. Submit a budget.

To support event hosts, the Board strongly recommends the hosts submit a proposed budget to the Board prior to the event. Although the hosts are expected to set a price for the event so that it is self-sustaining, circumstances may result in unexpected costs. If the Board has approved the budget prior to the event, reimbursement from the Board may be possible for reasonable cost overruns. As such, the Board would also request the hosts to donate any excess funds collected from the event back to the club to support future club activities.

6. Receipts and Supplies.

Hosts should retain all receipts for accounting purposes. Early in the planning stage it may be helpful for hosts to assign one person to purchase the common supplies (paper goods, alcohol) for the event. And hosts should feel free to request assistance from attendees in supplying chairs and additional tables if needed.