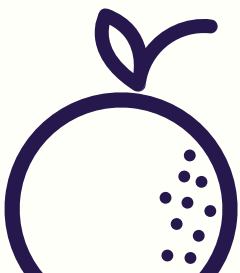
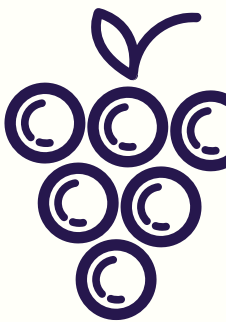
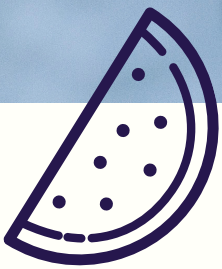




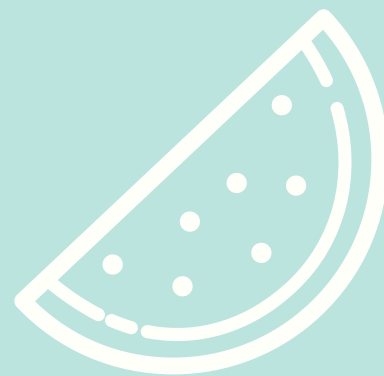
SOS PRESENTS...

SPECIAL DINNER MANUAL

**PRESENTED ARE SOME IDEAS THAT
HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL FOR
VARIOUS HOUSES THROUGHOUT
THE YEARS FOR PLANNING SPECIAL
DINNERS.**

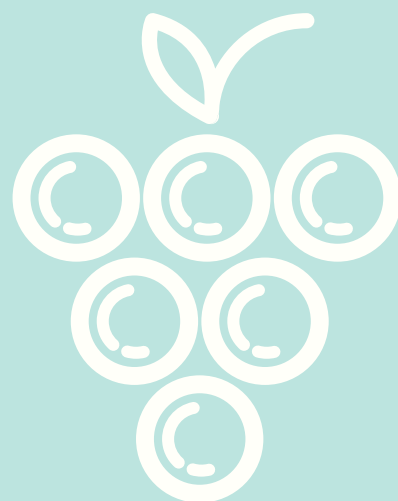


PLANNING



Date

- Start planning 3-6 weeks in advance (the earlier the better)
- Choose a date; is it a normal service date? If not, do you need to pay extra for chef, chef's assistants, hashers, and servers?
- Consider meeting with SOS to discuss any potential overtime costs.



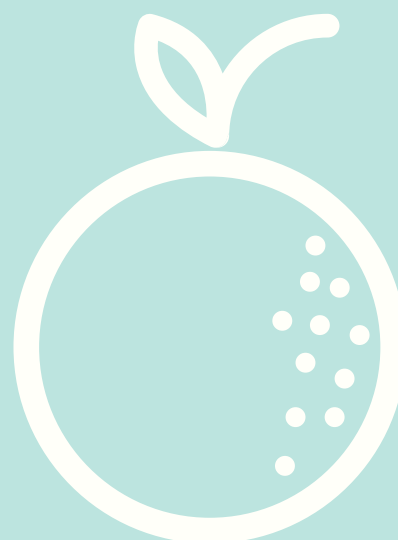
Theme

- This can really make the party/food/favors planning fun. Consider doing something seasonal.
- Remember, themes often lend themselves to stereotyping, so be conscious that although you may find an idea hilarious, others may strongly disagree.



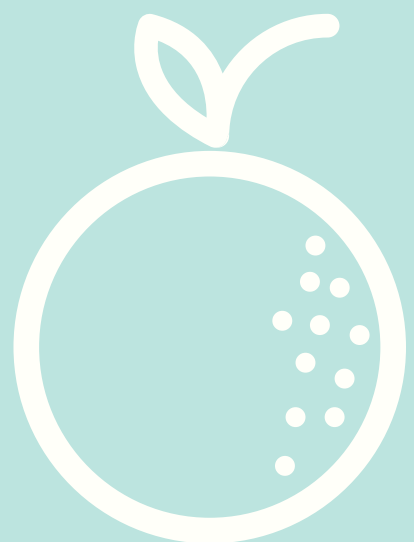
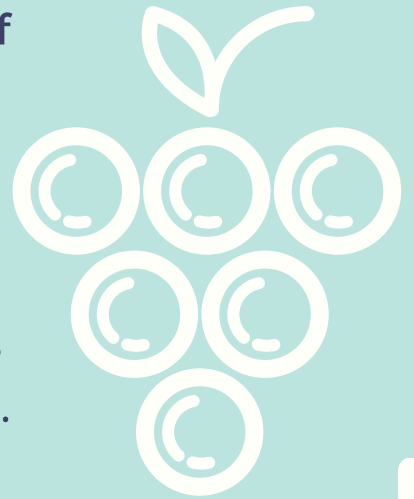
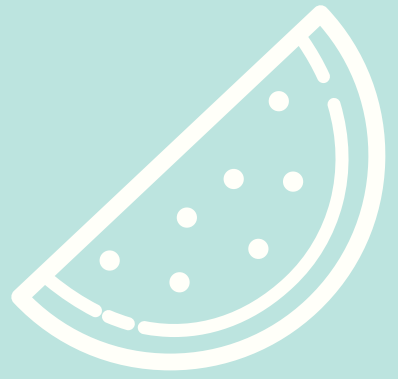
Menu

- Choose a menu. It doesn't have to be surf and turf (steak and lobster) but, whatever you choose, don't forget to provide vegetarian and vegan alternatives, if necessary.



- Will you have guests?
- How much will they each cost?
- Set a budget and stick to it. Be prepared to defend your decisions if residents complain, as always keep the "be defensible" motto in mind.
- You should set your budget line item in stone along with board bill. Obviously, if you serve on a normal service date this leads to cost offset from that meal and any potential overtime.
- Pro-forma budget – ask questions, research and find out how much various set pieces, menu items etc. actually cost.
- Here is a fairly typical budget for a special dinner with guests (total 110), deco, linens, entertainment, and servers:
 - \$1000 special food (note, you'll save ~\$250-??? that would normally have been used that night)
 - \$100-300 beverages
 - \$300 renting extra tablecloths, cloth napkins, utensils, serving-ware
 - \$100-400 band/DJ/PA
 - \$400-1000 extra OT for chefs, servers, chefs assistants
 - \$100-200 clean up crew hours, extra hashers
 - \$300-400 decorations, thank you gifts(?)

Total: \$2300-\$3600



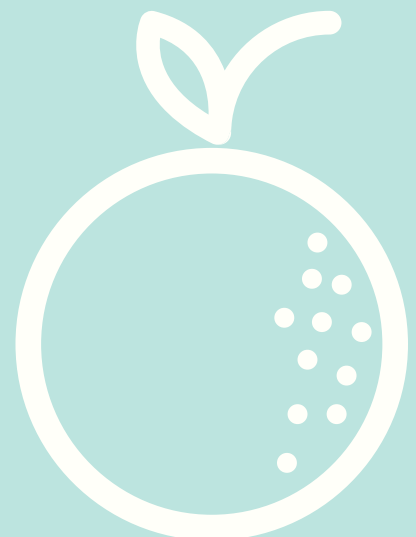
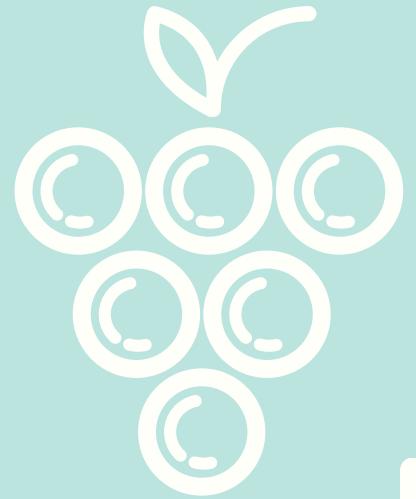
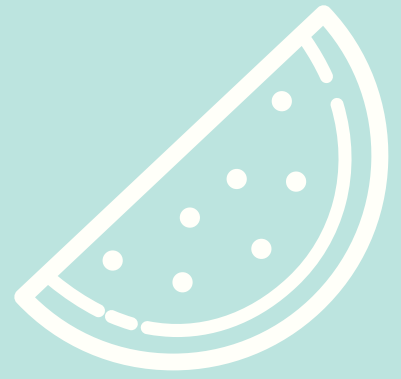
- Don't forget to add sales tax!
- But, before you balk at the price, consider the per capita cost of this scenario at 110 people, you're talking \$32.72/pp. Now extrapolate a similar menu and beverage and entertainment night in Palo Alto or San Francisco. Looks like a deal.

Registration

- Will you have a DJ or band? Give them plenty of warning, and confirm/get a contract going.
- How much do they get paid?
- Do you need to borrow/rent a sound system?

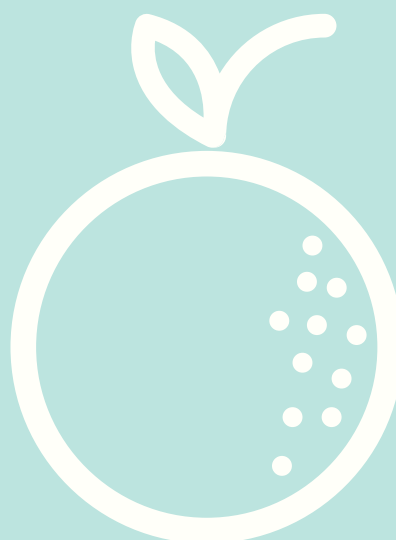
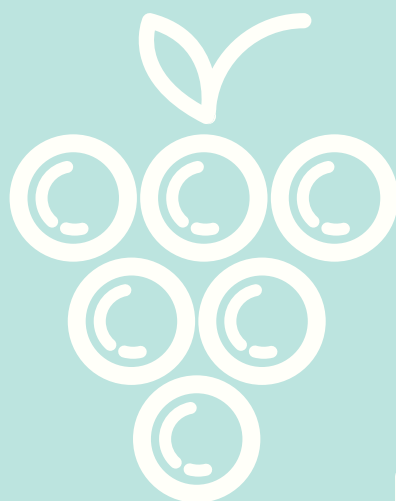
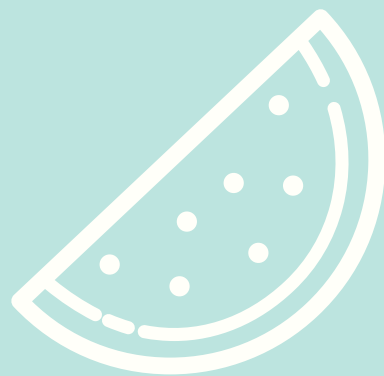
Advertising

- Generate excitement in the house by advertising through email, e-fliers, or actual posters.



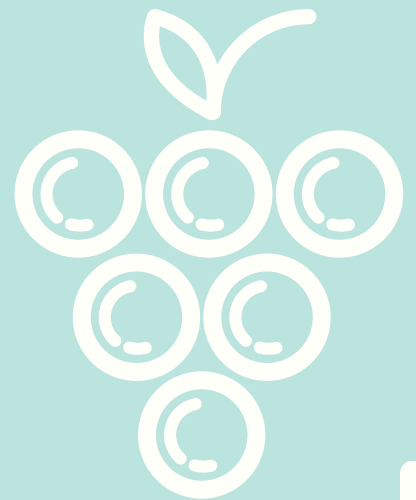
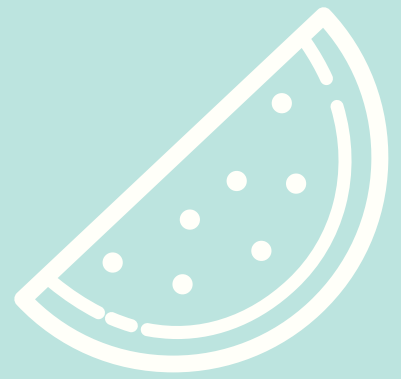
SET UP

- You'll want your room décor bought and planned 2 days before the event.
- Remember to order special table cloths, silverware, etc one week in advance.
- Napkins and tablecloths can usually be rented from your linen company. A1 Party Rentals, etc locally have great showrooms full of fun props, etc to consider.
- DO NOT use candles, torches, etc.
- EANABs – equally attractive non-alcoholic beverages should be provided.
- Water pitchers – you can save tons on drinks and traffic flow by providing water pitchers on tables.
- “Caves” – creating cave-like paper deco can be fun but is a tremendous fire/safety hazard and is environmentally destructive as well.
- Please consider alternative deco themes, using reusable materials.



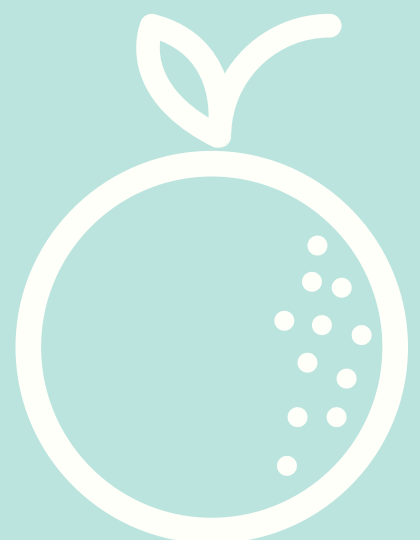
Set Up Continued...

- Staples – Avoid using staples and staples guns in or on Stanford buildings. Get creative and find ways to use alternatives (tape, streamers, balloons, etc) to create a fun space rather than using yards of paper, plastic, cloth and loads of staples.
- Give yourself at least 4 hours prior to serving to do final preparation, get help from the house, the more the merrier.
- People tend to enjoy events more if they are invested in them.



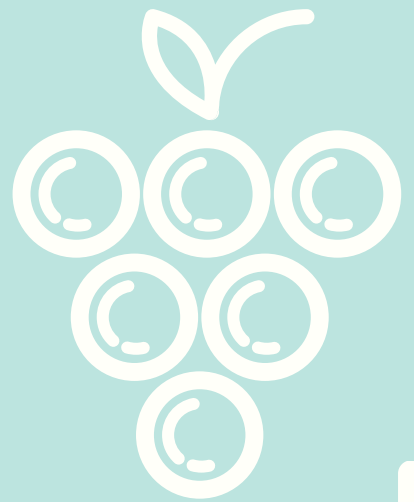
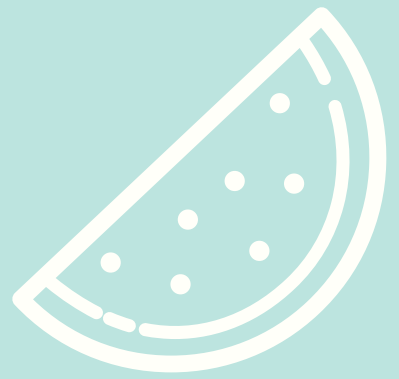
Food

- This is your kitchen staffs' chance to show off. All the deco in the world is worthless if no one likes the food.
- Special Dinner at its best is about the community. Be realistic and work with your chef(s) to make sure you are planning a menu that can be done in a timely and consistent manner.
- Hire help for prep/serving as necessary.
- Check with the chef(s) frequently on the days leading up to and the day of to make sure they are all set with their needs.



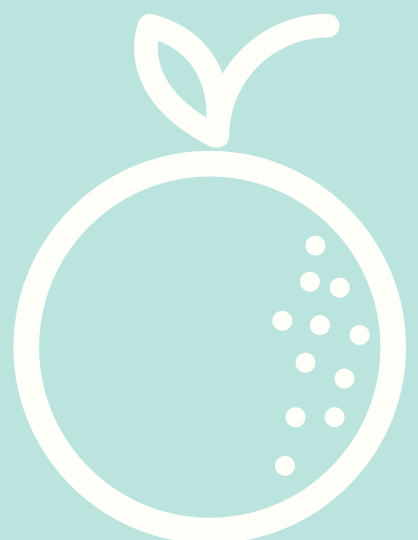
Food Continued...

- Themes and color can really create something “special”
- Keep appetizers simple so that the main dishes shine doing multi-courses warn residents in advance so they know dinner won't be ready at 6:00
- Keep your resident informed as to whether you will offer late plates for special dinner.
- Water and Sparkling Cider (pre-chilled and open) can save you a lot of headaches during dinner.
- Consider using caraffs.
- Do you have extra utensils for various courses (including dessert)? If not, do you have a hasher ready to clean utensils between courses?



Gifts/Thanks

- Introduce your chef(s), clap for them, give them gifts showing your appreciation if they warrant it.



CLEAN UP

- The most important aspect of planning any party is the post-party plan. Most events go just fine once the food and drinks start flowing.
- Real problems arise when no one is around to clean up, put away leftovers, take down decorations, return rented items, recycle, compost, take out trash, etc. Plan ahead and put as many resources into the aftermath as in the prep.
- There is nothing more demoralizing for your chef or hasher than to not have a manager around at the end of the event and having no plan for what to do with leftovers, etc.
- There is nothing more rewarding than feeling like the students and community we serve is respectful, thoughtful, as well as actually deserving of blowing off steam because they take responsibility for more than just their studies.

This document researched and written
by: Nick Peters

