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A FASHIONABLE LIFE

# What's In What's Out in Entertaining

Rita Konig, modern-day guru for the home and author of *Domestic Bliss*, shows how to throw an easy, chic dinner party now.



Right left: Shelia McCartney; middle: Theresa Sobush; left: Tera Sobush and Susan Johnson

## IN: Daisy-Chain Guest Lists

A successful dinner does not mean getting all of your closest friends around the table at once. Far from it. As a rule of thumb, make sure that everyone knows at least one other person but that no one knows everyone at the party.

**OUT:** Formal dinners with friends.

## IN: Simple Suppers

I recommend offering roast chicken with delicious mashed potatoes and gravy, like the French do. A cheese course afterward takes the pressure off making an enormous main meal. Serve one cheese from a specialty shop (goat cheese is in season now) on a beautiful plate with a simple salad or good crackers. Follow it with a small dessert like affogato, which is vanilla ice cream with cold espresso poured over it.

**OUT:** First courses.

**Bricklet Diner**  
phs. 567, and 2044,  
800 Global Tapin,  
NYC. 212-424-2829

See Where to Buy for details.

## IN: Broken Bars of Chocolate

Stove-brewed ily coffee served with a broken bar of Bonnat chocolate is by far the most appealing part of dinner. Or try something unusual, like French fruit jellies.

**OUT:** Expensive coffee. (It doesn't have to be expensive; offer a bowl of chilled Junior Mints, provided the bowl is lovely.)

**OUT:** Café-style coffee.

## IN: Black Candles

Candlelight is always very good at dinner, and right now black candles are chicer than white. They should be straight, not tapered, and put in cone-shaped or silver candlestick holders in different heights and uneven numbers.

**OUT:** Tea lights and gerbera dances floating in bowls of water on the table.

**Bonnet Chocolates**  
Box 5455,  
303-495-5600

**Wicks Party Supplies**  
529-590,  
252-223-8611

## IN: Champagne on the Rocks

Starting the evening with pink prosecco or champagne on ice in delicate tumblers looks so pretty, and the clink of the ice and the bubbles are so good for a party. If people sneer at the idea, tell them it is drunk like this in Paris, regularly by Fred Christon, who makes the stuff.

**OUT:** Martinis. Never make these at home.



Karen Elson

**Baccarat**  
one decanter,  
baccarat.fr

## IN: Serving Wine in Glass Jugs

Any sort of pitcher, either bulbous or tall and skinny, will do. And Baccarat's Perfection wineglass lives up to its name: I have never found another better. A glass funnel is also very handy for decanting everything from wine to olive oil to dishwashing liquid.

**OUT:** Caseworks-style holding your wineglass by the stem and sipping it. ■



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