



Diary of Your Home

Ideas, Tips, and Prompts for Recording
and Organizing Everything

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Everyday Life

People + Entertaining

Kitchen Lessons

House Recipes

Food Favorites

Rest + Play Activities

Holiday Traditions + Gatherings

Celebrate the simple aspects of life at home, the ones that you cherish most. Reflect on how the people in your home—their activities, interests, and experiences—form the distinctive rhythm by which you live.

Throwing a party is almost always a good idea. It doesn't have to be fancy or expensive and your house doesn't have to be perfect, or even clean. I love being invited over to a friend's messy house for take-out pizza because it's an expression of trust, intimacy, and a desire to be together. I always have to remind myself that bigger gatherings benefit from that same casual and generous spirit.

For our first holiday party, we borrowed a low-key menu from Peter's aunt who always serves two soups with bread and cheese on Christmas Eve. We also ordered an Amana ham from Iowa, made two sheets of potato-fennel gratin, and I somehow managed to pick the most complicated minestrone recipe ever. (When I pulled out yet another bag of vegetables to chop, Peter stopped speaking to me.) But once it was simmering away, we covered the dining table with platters of food, plugged in the Christmas tree, and watched our house fill up with forty friends and a gaggle of their children. It was such a happy night that we glowed for a week afterward and vowed to make it a tradition.

We've since hosted three more. The year that four friends and I were pregnant and couldn't stay awake past 8:30pm we had a brunch party with trays of country ham biscuits with cheddar and fig jam. One year we made Brunswick stew and another we did a take on a Scandinavian smorgasbord with gravlax, smoked meats, cheese, deviled eggs, Swedish meatballs, and boiled potatoes. For the past two years, we

declared the party “grown-ups only” and sent a save-the-date weeks early so that everyone had time to book babysitters. Planning the menus and cooking the food is fun for us, which is why keep doing it that way, even though we know our friends are happy enough for the chance to end a cold winter night drinking bourbon around a fire pit at 2am.

The people who inhabit and visit our homes bring them alive. While we tune into that phenomenon for the big events and special occasions, the everyday activity—eating, resting, playing, gathering—often slips by unnoticed despite the fact that it is the very thing that defines a home and creates the unique sensory experience of being there.

Holidays + Celebrations

What are your favorite occasions to celebrate at home? Which holidays and milestone events (birthdays, graduations, anniversaries, etc.) do you go all out for? Do you have established annual traditions, are you trying out new ideas, or are you just getting started? Use these pages to record both pre-event planning and post-event debriefing notes.

Occasion

Guests

Food + Menu

Traditions + Decorations

Gifts + Favors

Occasion

Guests

Food + Menu

Traditions + Decorations

Gifts + Favors

Food Favorites

Year

Grocery
Stores, Brands, Items

Bar
Wine, Beer, Spirits