

## **CHEF'S TIPS FOR A STRESS-FREE HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING**

**PLAN AHEAD:** Create your menu now. Why? When the menu is done you have your shopping list too.

**KNOW YOUR GUESTS:** Any special requests or favorites or dietary needs? Make them a part of your menu now.

**CHECKLIST:** Make a detailed list to help you stay on top of every task, every step of the way.

**MAKE A SHOPPING LIST:** Get it all down on paper and start shopping for whatever you can now, especially dry goods and things that don't have to be refrigerated.

**MAKE A CALENDAR:** What can you do early? Block out time for as much advanced prep as possible.

**THE PERFECT TURKEY:** Make it easy on yourself and order a delicious pre-cooked turkey or Honey-Baked Ham from your butcher/supermarket meat department. If buying a frozen turkey, remember to allow enough time for the bird to defrost. When defrosting, always do it in the refrigerator and always place the bird in a pan that can catch any liquid dripping from the bird as it defrosts.

**DIVIDE & CONQUER:** Make what you can a day ahead to free up time and oven space on the big day. If possible, use your crock pot as an oven or a place to keep foods warm while you finish cooking other items. A hot tray also works well to keep items warm.

**HAVING A BIG SIT-DOWN DINNER?** Share dishes with guests, if possible. A little help can go a long way to make life easier. Buy or borrow anything you may need to set the table like dishes, silverware, chairs, etc.

**SET THE TABLE:** Wow your guests with welcoming settings full of special touches like place cards, menus and decorative touches. Use seasonal items where possible; however, always check for those uninvited little guests.

**HAVE FUN:** Planning ahead helps take the stress out of a busy day so you too can enjoy a great meal with the people you love.