



Progressive Hedonist Gathering Guide

Super excited that you're interested in hosting a PH potluck. I started PH to counteract my sense of doom-driven paralysis by gathering friends around nourishing foods and committing to making small, joyful changes that benefit my community and the planet.

OVERVIEW

Here are the steps to hosting a purposeful Progressive Hedonist party:

- 1) INVITE** 5 to 25 guests with a variety of perspectives to share food that is nourishing for people & planet.
- 2) HIGHLIGHT** the small actions guests can take to restore our natural resources and replenish our sense of being in community. The 3 actions the PH recommends focusing on are: highlighting at least one ingredient that regenerates land or water; reducing waste; supporting the local food community by gathering to strengthen, renew and make new friendships.
- 3) FOLLOW UP** after the event to share resources, ideas, recipes and other thoughts and identify who might like to host the next event.

- 4) **SHARE THE MEAL** on social media (whatever your preferred medium is), and tag @progressive_hedonist so we can help amplify your event and add you to the PH family.

If you follow these steps, you're all set! If you'd like more detailed suggestions, read on.

PLANNING THE EVENT

Choose what kind of event you want to host and where to host it.

We've been hosting mostly potluck dinners, but also teas, tastings, breakfast coffees. We are excited about any kind of gathering! We believe in eliminating barriers to YES. Don't have a space? Go to a local cafe. Invite fewer people. Can't design an invite? Send an email. You get the idea. As long as you're getting together, offering joy, connection and inspiration to do more to fight climate change through food, you're doing this right.

Think through the guest list.

To raise awareness about the joy of making climate-friendly food choices, invite people who are climate curious as well as climate conscious. We want more people interested as well as activating those who are already on board with this mission.

Consider the number of guests.

To have meaningful conversations, we suggest a group from 6 all the way up to 25. Only invite the number that makes you, as the host, happy and confident.

Use our  [invite template](#) to send to your guest list.

INSTRUCTIONS: To use the template, select "File" in the top left corner of the Canva editor, then select "Make a copy" in the dropdown menu. There are various options for the invite, so select the one of your preference and delete the remaining pages (there is also a version where you can add your own organization logo and event information). When you're done populating the information for your event, select

“Share” in the top right corner, then select “Download” to export as a PDF or as an image (PNG or JPEG). Attach this invite into your email.

Once people RSVP, share a  [potluck sign up sheet](#).

INSTRUCTIONS: To use the template, select “File” in the top left corner of the Google Sheets editor, then select “Make a copy” in the dropdown menu. Insert your organization’s name in the document’s title, select “Share” in the top right corner, then change the General access settings to “Anyone with the link” and “Editor.” That way, you can copy the link into the email, and all your recipients can open and edit it.

Ask that the food reflect the intention of the event.

To do so, they can keep these principles in mind:

- **SOURCE SUSTAINABLY:** Ask your guests to make their dishes using ingredients that are grown, produced, or raised locally using environmentally responsible and ethical practices by people who are conscientious stewards of the land.
- **REDUCE COPIOUSLY:** To highlight the deliciousness of ingredients that otherwise might go to waste, ask your friends to get creative with food that is past its prime in their fridge—including soup, frittatas, stir-fries. Or, ask everyone to bring a container with them so they can take the leftovers home to avoid food going in landfill.
- **STORE BOUGHT IS TOTALLY FINE:** Not everyone is a cook! Plus, every party needs beverages and decorations. The one caveat is that they also should adhere to the same parameters of drink/decor that gives back to the planet.

Over-preparing is our comfort zone for food and folks.

We always anticipate 10-20% last minute cancellations. For this reason, we usually over-invite and over-prepare food. We make a hefty “main” course and salad so that even if half the people canceled, we’d have a delicious meal.

PH REQUEST: Ask someone to take photos of the event to share on Instagram, tagging @progressive_hedonist and highlighting the principle you've focused on for the event. We always think we're going to have the time and presence of mind to take pix, but experience has proved otherwise. It's fantastic to document the delicious dishes and all the ways the food can share and expand the message of the evening.

GETTING YOUR PLACE READY

Review the sustainability of everything on the table. When we began this venture, we discovered some of our decorations weren't very sustainable at all and so we changed up a few things including eliminating any kind of disposables (plates/cups/silverware/paper towels), opting for non-toxic candles, etc.

Put out empty bowls, platters, serving utensils so your guests can plate their own dishes when they arrive.

Leave pens and [dish place cards](#) on the table so guests can label their dishes, including their name, the name of their dish, any allergens.

You can also print our [Talking Topic](#) and [Food Fact](#) cards to set on the table, if useful to you.

INSTRUCTIONS: Once you open the card links above, select "Print" from the top right corner of the menu. This will redirect you to a Preview page, so select "Print" again to get to the Print settings. The print files are all formatted to be the standard letter-size (8.5" x 11"). Please use cardstock to print these, and cut the edges using the trim marks.

Have a supply of takeaway containers for any leftovers and/or arrange for unsalvageable leftovers to be composted.

ONCE YOUR GUESTS HAVE ARRIVED

Every event is different and is shaped by the desire and POV of the host, but here's Dana's template.

6:30 PM | Meet & mingle for 30 minutes to an hour. Guests plate their potluck dishes and set out on the buffet.



7:00 PM | Welcome everyone.

Host talks for 5-10 minutes (short! sweet) about why we're gathered. Mention Progressive Hedonist and the highlighted principle. Below is a sample intro for PH:

Thank you for joining me at this Progressive Hedonist dinner. I love having you all here! Progressive Hedonists believe that positive action is the antidote to climate doom, that making small and consistent changes can be unexpectedly joyous and profoundly impactful. So tonight, we're gathering in this spirit, to recognize that we as individuals can make adjustments in our own lives and improve the prospects for ourselves, our neighbors and loved ones, and our planet. Before dessert, I'm going to talk a bit more about and hear from you about tk. But, first, let's feast!

7:10 PM | Invite people to get a plate and serve themselves

8:10 PM | Dinner is cleared. Plates are collected. Invite guests to get dessert and come back to have one group conversation.

8:15 PM | Host asks the guests one question from  [our list of talking topics](#) and  [our list of food facts](#).

8:45-9PM | Conclude sharing, give thanks, offer a wrap up. As Priya Parker says: "Endings are a reminder of why you gathered in the first place, and give guests a chance to make sense of the time they spent together."

PH REQUEST: Ask someone in the group to pay it forward and host the next Progressive Hedonist potluck. Let people know that you'll follow up with an email of resources collected from the event.

FOLLOWING UP

Use our [🔗 follow-up email template](#) to send to your guest list.

PH REQUEST: The template has space for you to thank everyone for coming, share resources, thoughts and ideas that were inspiring. It also includes a link to a [feedback form](#) as well as the [Progressive Hedonist quiz](#). Everyone's input will help improve our work.

RECIPES

A few recipe suggestions from my past events that highlight regenerative ingredients like buckwheat/soba; chickpeas; beans; reducing meat by substituting mushrooms for meat; highlighting local vegetables... a simple big salad of local greens and platter of roasted seasonal vegetables is my recipe-free go to!

- TOFU: [Vegan mapo tofu](#)
 - QUINOA: [Quinoa and bean salad](#)
 - CHICKPEAS: [Chickpea stew](#)
 - BUCKWHEAT: [Soba noodles](#)
 - BEANS: [Sardinian minestrone](#)
 - SEASONAL VEGETABLES: [Roasted radishes](#); [Squash galette](#)
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