Have Party Will Travel Discusses New Research on Food Waste at Events

How Can Special Event Catering Simplify SLC Home Christmas Parties?

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Have Party Will Travel is drawing attention to new research on food waste at social gatherings as households begin planning holiday celebrations. Preparing food for a Christmas party involves more than selecting dishes and estimating portions. Uncertain guest numbers, excess preparation, and oversized servings can all contribute to food waste.

A 2026 systematic review published in Frontiers in Sustainability examined 32 studies on household food waste during events and social gatherings. Researchers affiliated with the University of Zululand identified over-purchasing, poor meal planning, excessive food preparation, inadequate storage, and ineffective leftover management as common factors behind avoidable waste. The findings highlight why careful menu planning and realistic food estimates matter when organizing holiday events.

Research Points to Food Planning as a Key Factor

The review suggests that reducing food waste at gatherings requires practical planning as well as awareness. Strategies identified across the studies included estimating food quantities in advance, controlling portion sizes, storing food properly, and finding ways to reuse or redistribute suitable leftovers.

A separate 2026 systematic review in Frontiers in Sustainability, focused on food waste in the hospitality sector, examined 31 studies. It identified opportunities to manage waste before food reaches the kitchen, during preparation, and after meals are served. The findings point to the value of planning food quantities, reviewing serving arrangements, and considering how leftovers will be handled.

Brandon Dennis, Owner of Have Party Will Travel, says that estimating food quantities and discussing menu requirements in advance are important parts of planning a catered gathering.

“One of the biggest challenges when planning food for a gathering is knowing how much to prepare. Having a realistic guest count, discussing menu preferences in advance, and choosing suitable serving portions can help reduce excess food. Good planning also gives hosts more time to focus on their guests and enjoy the celebration.”

For special event catering, sharing the expected guest count and dietary requirements with the catering team can help hosts plan suitable menus, serving styles, and food quantities while avoiding unnecessary food preparation.

Matching Catering Plans to the Size of the Gathering

The amount and type of food needed can vary widely between a small family Christmas party and a larger seasonal celebration. Social event catering plans may involve shared dishes, buffet service, or individually served meals, each with different portions and preparation needs.

Planning Food and Service for Different Guest Counts

Larger celebrations often involve more detailed planning, from estimating food quantities to organizing serving times and storage. Full-service event catering may also cover setup, staffing, and event-day coordination, depending on the package selected.

Have Party Will Travel, which provides catering and event services in Utah, recognizes that guest counts, menu choices, and service arrangements are important details to discuss during event planning. For hosts considering event catering in Salt Lake City, discussing these details early can help create a more organized plan for the celebration.

Practical Questions for Holiday Hosts

Before confirming a catering arrangement, hosts can consider a few planning questions:

How many guests are expected, and when will the final count be confirmed?

Which menu items are suitable for the guest list and dietary needs?

How will food be portioned and served?

What arrangements are available for keeping food at safe temperatures?

How will suitable leftovers be stored or handled after the event?

These questions can help hosts communicate their needs and understand the food service arrangements. They are also useful when comparing professional event caterers in Utah, since service details and package inclusions can vary.

Have Party Will Travel encourages hosts to discuss event size, menu preferences, and service expectations before finalizing holiday catering plans. Careful coordination can help households prepare for their guests while making more informed decisions about food quantities.

About Have Party Will Travel

Founded in 1995, Have Party Will Travel is a Salt Lake City-based catering and event company serving the Wasatch Front and surrounding areas. It provides catering and event planning services for weddings, corporate functions, private parties, and social gatherings. Its services include custom menus, food preparation, staffing, rentals, setup, and event coordination. The company has received several recognitions, including the Governor’s Small Business Giant Step Award, Salt Lake Chamber’s Entrepreneurial Success Award, Commitment to Excellence Award, and Best of State. It has also been featured in Salt Lake Magazine and Utah Business Magazine.

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