

Headline: Seven Tips to Having a Successful Friendsgiving

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DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Del. – The Thanksgiving season is upon us and for many Airmen here at Dover, it will be spent away from their families. That's the bad news. The good news is that many of those Airmen will be celebrating Friendsgiving!

When spending Thanksgiving with your family isn't an option, as is the case for many service members, Friendsgiving is an opportunity to bring everyone together. It's also a great reason to eat a week's worth of calories in one sitting. Unfortunately, there may be some miscommunications that can lead to a less than seamless evening. So put on your oven mitts and pull out the baking pan you've never used because these are seven tips to having a successful Friendsgiving.

1. Be Aware of Dietary Preferences

Look, we get it. Your grandmother just sent you the recipe to her peanut turkey stuffing and you're just dying to try it out. But is it worth eating it in the hospital? Send a quick text or call to your guests and ask them if there are any ingredients you should avoid bringing to the dinner table. It might just save you a trip to the emergency room.

2. Who is Bringing What?

Imagine this. You're sitting around the Friendsgiving table, surrounded by your favorite people. But for dinner, this evening, you are having turkey, three bowls of stuffing, two plates of yams and two more bowls of stuffing. Coordinating and making sure to ask the host what they want you to bring will keep you from having a repetitive dinner. And for the host, don't ask too much of your guests. For example, it's a given that the host should make the turkey unless otherwise discussed. There are a multitude of websites geared toward organizing potlucks. Websites like Perfectpotluck.com, Thingtobring.com and Signupgenius.com/potluck are useful for events just like Friendsgiving that will keep everyone on task!

3. Don't be afraid of inviting co-workers ... even supervisors

Hey, sergeants like turkey too! For many of us, our co-workers can be like our family away from family. So let Friendsgiving be an environment to talk about things that don't pertain to the shop or your job. It's an opportunity to take off the rank, watch the game and maybe your supervisor will even turn out to be a normal person! But, let's just remember to keep it classy and professional, Dover.

4. Bring Your OWN Tupperware

This one is simple. When it comes to Friendsgiving, there will be leftovers. So here's the rules: Don't steal the host's Tupperware. Don't steal the host's Tupperware. AND ... Don't steal the host's Tupperware.

5. Friendsgiving in the Dorms

So you may be thinking that there is no way to host Friendsgiving in the dorms. Good news! You're wrong. Many of the dorm buildings have either private or public kitchens for cooking. And all it takes is getting a long enough table and voila, a Dover Dorms Friendsgiving. An event like this can definitely attract some stragglers so be sure to have places set for new friends as well. Remember: keep your friends close and a fire extinguisher closer!

6. Lots of Ice

You may run into problems with refrigerator space with all the food and drinks coming in and out of the kitchen. So if you do decide to have a cooler or two, make sure to buy plenty of ice. This is an easy way to free up fridge space and keep everything nice and cool.

7. Help with Clean-Up

Finally, don't leave your host's home a mess. There will be plenty of dishes and pots and pans that are just too much for one set of hands ... but several? You could be done before dessert! Leaving the host's home clean is a great ending to an evening of friends, food and your Dover family.

Spend this holiday season with the people closest to you. Maybe this season that doesn't mean family. Maybe this season, the people that are closest to you are the ones who have been with you through swings, mids and on-call shifts. Maybe it's your roommates, supervisors or friends you met on the town here in Dover. Friendsgiving can be the perfect day to give thanks to the friends you've made and all the things they have done for you and that you have done for them.

Happy Friendsgiving, Team Dover!