

USA WEEKEND

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Harrison Ford and **Chadwick Boseman**
talk about America's pastime — and life.



Reinventing POTLUCK

Tips for throwing (and attending) the party where everyone's game to bring a dish.

BY NATALIE ERMANN RUSSELL

THE GOOD THING about potluck parties is that if you're the host, you don't have to cook everything. The bad thing about potlucks is that if you're a guest, you always have to cook *something*. Still, it's one of the best and most popular ways of entertaining these days. Here's how to throw a party like a pro:

Plan it online. Websites such as LuckyPotluck.com, SignUpGenius.com and PerfectPotluck.com will let a host offer her guests a fixed number of slots for each type of dish. "You can create a meal plan where you need two appetizers, two main dishes and two desserts," says Adina Bailey, co-founder of PerfectPotluck.com. "Once two people sign up for appetizers, the next people who come to your sign-up will have to choose to bring either a main dish or dessert."

Always make more. "I usually bring enough of a dish to feed at least twice as many people as I am bringing to the potluck," says Ben Robie, founder of LuckyPotluck.com. That usually winds up in the same ballpark as the recommended 8 to 12 servings or a 9- by 13-inch pan's worth of food.

Try a theme. "A themed potluck works well if the host chooses one that will add extra entertainment value for guests, but not extra work," says Angel Rutledge of SignUpGenius.com. "Something like a breakfast theme means easy-to-prepare dishes that everyone will enjoy."

Tools of the trade. People who frequent potluck parties may want to have on hand an insulated casserole carrier (Anchor Hocking, \$20), a hot pack (Vesture, \$11.99) and perhaps a warming tray (Oster, \$80). And for those who usually bring dessert, tote the sweets in a cupcake and cake carrier (Sur La Table, \$29.95). ☐

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