



GUIDE TO THE



ART OF HOSPITALITY

CHEF JURE TOMIČ

Ošterija Debeluh



www.argeta.com



Hospitality is a traditional skill that combines warmth, kindness, and attention. It is an art form that demands a special appreciation of the people we welcome into our homes. It's about the gestures, both modest and grand, that accompany every social occasion and that we can use to ensure that our guests will always feel safe, welcome, and appreciated.

We've prepared some tips and advice to help make you a true master of hospitality. You can then showcase the knowledge and expertise you've gained in a virtual experience prepared for you in cooperation with the author of this year's Argeta Exclusive flavor – the master of hospitality himself, Chef Jure Tomič.





FOOD



The food you serve your guests represents the core of every social occasion. Every proper host is aware of how important it is to impress their guests from the first bite. Since preparing food can be a tough task, you should pay special attention to the many smaller steps that can make the process much easier.

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

Inquire about any dietary restrictions your guests may have, especially if you are preparing something special, such as seafood. Are they especially sensitive to something, or can they not eat it? There's nothing easier than just asking, and we assure you that everyone—including you—will feel much better for it in the end.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ



If you can't prepare beforehand, don't worry. You are not a nutritionist, and no one expects you to make everything perfect. However, you can ensure that you prepare multiple options so every guest can find something they like.

CHOOSING THE RECIPE

When selecting dishes, follow established recipes and avoid experimenting too much. Don't make things harder for yourself, and never attempt to prepare something for the first time, as you might end up in a pickle.





FROM START TO FINISH

If you decide to prepare a dish that takes longer, you should also prepare a snack or light starter for your guests. That way, you will ensure your guests aren't hungry while you are preparing the dish in your kitchen. A starter is also a great way of inviting your guests to the table and starting a conversation.

Always finish the meal with a dessert. It can be very simple (a fruit or cheese platter). Dessert signals that the meal has ended and it's time for the more relaxed part of the get-together.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ



In some cultures, meals are finished with a cup of coffee, so have some available and ask your guests if they would like a cup once the meal concludes. You can also serve coffee with some pastries, and don't forget to ask about milk and sugar, as your guests may have different preferences.



DRINKS



Drinks are essential to rounding out the whole dining experience. Your guests must never be thirsty, so always pay attention to their glasses and keep diligently topping them up.

DRINK SELECTION

It's best to prepare a drink selection that complements your menu. Of course, it also makes sense to check in advance if your guests have any drink restrictions and prepare some alternatives to the most commonly served beverages.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ



Red, white, or rosé? Wine selection is, of course, important and usually depends on the food we serve. However, it can happen that a guest may not drink a certain variety of drinks. Inquire about their wishes and find something that will satisfy everyone.

THE GUEST IS ALWAYS RIGHT

Make sure you have a diverse selection of drinks, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic. Always ask what the guest wants, and don't doubt their choice. And, most importantly, don't force them into something they don't want.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ



Don't forget about water! The easiest solution is for a pitcher of water to always be on the table – that way, everyone can pour their water as they wish.

ATMOSPHERE



The environment in which the guests arrive will make the first impression, and every host wants it to be a good one, as it creates an image of the host and defines the rest of the visit.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ



A scented candle can help create a pleasant atmosphere. Small details can make the guests feel like you made an effort for them. Just make sure the scent is not too overpowering.

TIDY, BUT NOT NECESSARILY PERFECT

Ensure your home is well-kept, tidy, and clean but not sterile. Don't mop the floors before the visit, as there is a chance that guests won't want to take off their shoes. With slippers ready at the door, you can discretely express your wish for guests to leave their shoes in the hallway. And if they don't, you can clean your floors after they leave or the next day.

REMINDER



Don't forget about a clean bathroom. Along with the main area where you'll be entertaining, this is the most important space for your guests.





SOOTHING TO THE EARS

Good music playing in the background is an important part of every get-together, as it helps create a hospitable atmosphere, makes guests feel more relaxed, and avoids uncomfortable silences. However, make sure it's not too loud, as loud music can quickly create an uncomfortable atmosphere.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ



Consider a suitable genre and prepare the playlist in advance. This will help you avoid unwanted musical surprises.



THE TABLE



The table is the star of the show and the main stage of any dining experience. Prepare it in a way that suits the occasion, and always have it ready before your guests arrive. Preparing and decorating the table is an art in itself. However, it doesn't always take much. Sometimes, less is more, and even just a tablecloth or table runner can be a sign that the host made a special effort for their guests.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ



Also, make an effort to carefully pick out suitable napkins, as these can be small details that make a big difference. They can be made from cloth, or nice paper ones can be suitable, but paper towels should stay in the kitchen where they belong.

PORCELAIN FROM THE DISPLAY CASE

Pay special attention to the plates, glasses, and cutlery. They don't need to be museum pieces from a display case; just make sure they are clean, from a matching set, and suitable for the food and drinks you plan to serve.

A PRACTICAL EXAMPLE



If you are serving steak, make sure that the knives are up to the task. Dull or non-serrated knives may cause some problems for your guests.



CONVERSATION

Along with the food, your guests will most likely remember their conversations – especially if they are fun and interesting. Put down your phone and turn off the television – dedicate yourself fully to your guests. Ask questions and listen – both are equally important.

WHERE IS THE HOST?

Even if you have lots to do with preparing everything, be a part of the table, not just a person from the kitchen. During the meal, sit down at the table and eat with your guests. If the conversation dies down, encourage it and try to include everyone in it. Be mindful of making sure no one is left out.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ



For easier conversation steering, you can prepare a list of topics or anecdotes to use in advance.



THE GUESTS



A host cannot be a host without guests, and a good host is a host whose guests feel a sense of warmth from the very start and leave feeling satisfied. They must feel the hospitality as soon as they walk through the door, where you greet and warmly welcome them. Never let your guests open the door themselves or enter a room alone.

NEW FACES

Add new things gradually—this also applies to people. So, don't invite a bunch of strangers, even if you want your friends to meet each other. The conversation will flow more easily if the guests already know each other (even if not particularly well).

SEDEŽNI RED

Consider the seating order, especially if you are hosting more than eight people. You can create a better seating order by thinking about which guests share interests and which guests can more easily start a flowing conversation. Also, take the practical aspect into account. You want to sit closer to the kitchen, as you'll be standing up often, while guests who may have trouble standing up should be put in the most comfortable seats.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ

For a more elegant seating experience, you can prepare name cards in advance and place them on the table so your guests can find their assigned seats.

This will help you avoid any potentially uncomfortable situations with switching and assigning seats later.



FOR THE GUESTS



Sometimes, instead of being the host, you'll find yourself playing the guest role. But you can still contribute to the atmosphere and show some hospitality to the host or hostess yourself.

NEVER ARRIVE EMPTY-HANDED

You never visit someone empty-handed. Even a small gift or gesture will show the host or hostess that you value their effort. If you know your host or hostess well and know what they like, this can be a bottle of good wine, and you can never miss with a lovely bouquet of flowers or some useful home or household items.

OFFER TO HELP

Offer the host or hostess your help with setting or clearing the table. They will most likely not accept the help, but it's the thought that counts.

TIP FROM CHEF TOMIČ



Anyone is glad to be offered some help, but be careful not to pry or intrude on the host or hostess' plans, as this can quickly lead to an uncomfortable situation.





POLITENESS COSTS NOTHING BUT YIELDS MUCH

Express your gratitude! Thank the host or hostess for the invitation, compliment their food and drink selection, and mention if you find anything nice about a room – but don't overdo it. Insincerity can quickly be picked up on.



IN CONCLUSION...



Things won't always go according to plan, and you must be prepared for this. No matter, there's beauty in imperfection, and with good preparation, you'll be up to any challenge. Embrace the evening, and don't forget that you should enjoy the occasion, too.

The list below can help guide you through the preparation process and in accommodating your guests. Good luck!

IF YOU WANT TO MASTER THE ART OF HOSPITALITY, DON'T FORGET TO:

- Think about who to invite***
- Prepare a menu***
- Check your food selection with your guests***
- Select the right drinks***
- Prepare background music***
- Think about what you can prepare in advance and what you have to prepare immediately before you serve***
- Think about the plates, glasses, and cutlery you will need***
- Set the table***
- Think about the seating order (if you need one)***
- Tidy up your home, clean the bathroom***

