

# Easy Entertaining Products and Tips for the Holidays



This is the time of year we we always have people drop in for some holiday cheer. Some events are more formal than others. I always keep some standard items on hand, just in case I need to throw together an hors d'oeuvre tray or cocktail snacks.

My go-to place if I am entertaining a crowd is Costco. Here are a few of their products that are my favorite to use.

For a charcuterie tray, a mixture of cured meats, cheeses, fruits, vegetables, and items I use to fill the empty spaces~~olives, nuts, and berries can be purchased in one grocery run.



\$10.99 Already pre-sliced

These spiral minis are so delicious. You can add a slice of pickle or wrap them with a chive blade to customize the look.



\$13.99

Fresh crab is a special treat that can be served many ways. This one from Phillips is the best I have found so far. I shared my warm crab dip a few blog posts ago (click [here](#) for recipe). Nothing like having something hot and bubbly to dip your cracker or bread into on a chilly winter night.



\$21.99

This cheese pack comes with 4 different kinds of cheeses and is already pre-sliced. Pull out a holiday cookie cutter and you can make your tray instantly festive.



\$8.89



Boursin cheese (with 3 different flavors) is not only yummy but I like the size for tucking into my board.



\$5.99

Everyone loves Brie and it is only \$5.49 ~~this one is whole (5" in diameter) and perfect for baking. Place the wheel on an oven-safe serving dish, bake at 350 degrees for 5-7 minutes (longer if you want it softer or runny). Any leftover cranberry sauce from Thanksgiving? Pour some over the top; add

walnuts if you'd like or some orange zest, garnish with rosemary. Viola! You have a holiday themed Brie in under 15 minutes! Sour cherry or fig jam will work equally as well.



\$5.49



This attractive goat cheese log is filled with holiday flavors-cinnamon and cranberries. Another good cheese to just unpack and put out. It is best at room temperature.



\$6.89

Olives are a staple in our refrigerator all year. This 3 pack is \$9.99 and are very flavorful.



Two delicious dips: The Spinach Artichoke Parmesan dip can be put in a bread bowl or warmed up in an over safe container, too.



\$8.99



\$8.49

Costco's selection of fresh berries is rather good. I tend to do berries vs. cut apples to minimize the prep work.



\$3.49



For a dessert tray, you can't beat these mini cream puffs. The extras can go into the freezer to nibble on later. That can be a good and bad thing!



\$9.99

Every Christmas, my dear friend, Linda would make the most delicious macarons. I swear they were better than the ones I've tasted in Paris. However, she abandoned me to get married and move to the east coast so now I buy these. They do well in a pinch.



\$15.99

The key to making a warm and welcoming spread for you family and guests is to be creative in the presentation. If the food looks enticing, then you know it will taste good.

Here are some photos from the Inspire Workshop that I attended in October in Texas, hosted by KariAnne from [Thistlewood](#)

[Farms](#). I met Barb from [Gasthaus on the Meadow](#), who catered the event. She is absolutely brilliant in her presentation~~using different heights and props to display the food.





How cute is this? Adding a candle to the tray and writing a message on the wood slice is clever. I believe you can purchase these at Michaels or a similar craft store.



Combining textures, colors and heights makes this very exciting...see how she displayed the mini spirals from Costco?





The added touches of chrysanthemum flowers and sprigs of ivy add color and dimension this sandwich board.



What about this dessert display? Incredible!



Even if you don't have a Costco nearby, I am hoping you can find the same or similar items at your grocery store. We have such a great selection here in Phoenix.

I hope you have enjoyed these tips and will take it up a notch this year and create beautiful food displays during the holidays.

Mary