

## DINNERS AND PARTIES

Social events, such as dinners and parties, provide opportunities to spend time with internationals in a relaxed, fun environment where friendships can be built and cultivated. Read on for some practical tips on how to sponsor these events!

### **Spiritual content?**

If you're sponsoring a small dinner or party, don't be too worried about discussing spiritual matters—just enjoy yourself and see where the conversation leads. You can always exchange contact information and set up a time to meet in the future.

On the other hand, you may choose to sponsor a special dinner or party where a guest speaker will present a topic such as, “The True Meaning of Christmas,” or “My Faith Journey.” In these situations, the audience should know from your advertising that the evening will include some significant spiritual content. Regardless of the goal of your event, whether it is cultivating friendships or exposing your guests to a credible Christian witness, be sure to bathe everything in prayer and try to help people have a fun time.

### **As you get started...**

Besides determining the “basics” of time, date and place, here are some questions to consider when planning a dinner or a party:

- How will you publicize the event? (Word of mouth, email, Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
- How can you involve others? What roles can your volunteers and friends play?
- How will the food be provided? (Homemade? Order pizza? Catered? Do my guests have dietary restrictions?)
- How many will attend? Small is good but big can be fun, too, if you have the room.
- Are children expected? If so, how will you keep the children occupied and happy?
- Will you use nametags?
- Will you have a program?

Just dinner and casual conversation will work most of the time, but if you have a crowd you might want to consider these questions: Will you have some type of program? Do you want to break into small groups and discuss some questions? Will you call everyone together and

present some type of lecture or testimony? Will you seek to share the gospel? Remember you don't want to surprise your guests with the gospel if that was never mentioned in your invitation — it's just not right, and it may be the last time these people attend your events.

**Special Note:** At large events, where there is a program involving spiritual content, you will usually find it helpful to pass out comment cards so your guests can give you their contact information and indicate their interest in talking further about the material presented.