

THE RIVERFRONT SCOOP

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THE RIVER FRONT MASTER

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TIS' THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY

The Holiday spirit certainly has all of us here on the River Front staff feeling pretty happy and jolly. Here's hoping the spirit has caught you as well. From all of us to all of you, have a very Happy Holiday season and a Happy New Year.



ENTERTAINING IN TIGHT SPACES

Anyone who lives in an apartment or small home knows the difficulty of entertaining guests in a tight space. Even though it is challenging, it can be done, with you and all of your guests enjoying your time together. Although you can often extend your party to a deck or other outdoor area, weather conditions sometimes will not allow that to happen. In those cases, you'll have to find a solution inside your home.

To accomplish this, first clear up as much space as possible. Remove clutter from your living areas. Kitchen appliances should be tucked away to increase counter space. You might also want to push your furniture towards the walls to increase floor space.

Also consider if you can use the spaces in your home more efficiently. Expand your seating areas by using padded dining chairs in your living room and placing large throw pillows on the floor. Add a couple of barstools to your kitchen space for guests who like to linger in the kitchen. Add a card table to your living room to increase seating for dinner. Not everyone needs to sit at the same table to enjoy the company. You may find that your guests will enjoy eating in several small groups in the dining room, kitchen, and living room areas. You can also use a large ottoman as another serving area. Use a large, oversized tray to convert it into a firm surface.

When you are ready to serve food to your guests, consider going with a buffet style of service. You can also place trays of food in every corner of your rooms. That way, your guests will not be crowded into the same place, trying to access the food. With it scattered about, people will spread out, maximizing the use of your available space. Finally, keep any food you serve as simple as possible. Sauces and other messy foods can cause a problem in a tight space.



WHAT IS CHANUKAH?

In 2nd century BCE, in an effort to pull Jews away from Judaism and adopt the Greek culture – Hellenism, the Syrian-Greek regime of Antiochus outlawed aspects of Jewish observance, including the study of Torah, which began to decay the foundation of Jewish life and practice. In response, a band of Jewish settlers took to the hills of Judea in a revolt against this threat to Jewish life. Led by Matitياهو, and later his son Judah the Maccabee, this small band of devout Jews led guerrilla warfare against the Syrian army. Antiochus sent thousands of well-armed troops to crush the rebellion, but the Maccabees succeeded in driving the foreigners from their land.



Jewish fighters entered Jerusalem in December, 164 BCE. The Holy Temple was in shambles, defiled and desecrated by foreign soldiers. They cleansed the Temple and re-dedicated it on the 25th day of the Jewish month of Kislev. When it came time to re-light the Menorah, they searched the entire Temple, but only one small jar of oil bearing the pure seal of the High Priest could be found. Miraculously, the small jar of oil burned for eight days, until a new supply of oil could be brought. From then on, Jews have observed a holiday for eight days in honor of this historic victory and the miracle of the oil. Today, the observance of Chanukah, meaning “dedication” features the lighting of a special Chanukah menorah with eight branches (plus a helper candle), adding one new candle each night. Other customs include spinning the dreidel (a top with Hebrew letters on the sides), eating “oily” foods like potato latkes (pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly donuts), and giving Chanukah gelt (coins) to children.

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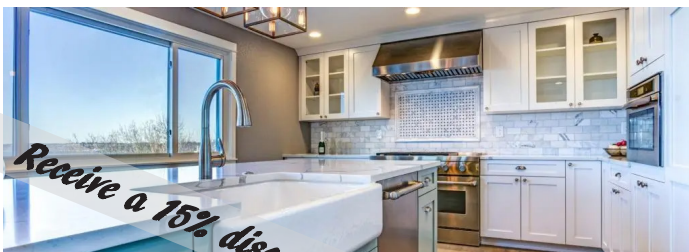
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Smoked Salmon Dip

Ingredients

- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 6 ounces smoked salmon, chopped
- ¼ cup capers, or to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped green onion (Optional)
- 1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh dill
- ¼ cup heavy whipping cream
- 3 dashes Worcestershire sauce
- 3 drops hot pepper sauce
- 1 squeeze fresh lemon juice

Directions

- Process cream cheese in a food processor to soften completely.
- Add smoked salmon, capers, green onion, dill, cream, Worcestershire sauce, hot pepper sauce, and lemon juice. Process the mixture again until creamy and smooth.
- Serve with crackers & vegetables.





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