



# Effortless Festivities

*A Fuss-Free Guide to  
Christmas Party Hosting*

BALANCE | GLO



Dive into the holiday spirit with our latest guide, offering a stress-free approach to hosting the perfect Christmas party. Discover six festive recipes designed for simplicity without compromising on flavour. From a warming mocktail, to savoury and sweet nibbles, this guide will support you in hosting memorable celebrations without the stress. Say goodbye to kitchen chaos and hello to joyous and effortless Christmas gatherings!

*Love Jen + Ev xxx*



Evelyn Joyce, Co-Founder

# Intro to Our 'Effortless Festivities' Recipe Plan

Evelyn is one of the co-founders of Balance and Glo, and LOVES Christmas!!! She couldn't wait to curate this guide showcasing some of her favourite Christmas recipes.

Evelyn loves inviting friends and family over and preparing little nibbles, and in our latest guide she wanted to not only share recipes, but also demonstrate that hosting doesn't have to be expensive or stressful.

## Christmas Party Hosting

I am SOOO excited to be sharing this guide for you. As I've got older, more and more, I find myself happier staying in and inviting friends over than heading out. Lighting my favourite candles, dimming the lights and get comfy around the fire. There's something about the festive period that makes me want to stay in more. Taking the pressure off and treating my friends to delicious food and overdue catch-ups. But I understand that the idea of hosting can leave some full of dread. I'm here to share that hosting doesn't have to be stressful and instead can be chilled and joyous experience! With a little planning and creativity, you can host a memorable Christmas party that your friends will cherish.

### Top 10 tips for Fuss Free Hosting

**1. Keep it simple:** Inform your guests that you will be serving drinks and light bites. Don't go crazy and over cater. I would recommend 2 savoury options (check out the two savoury recipes in this guide), and 1-2 sweet options. Plus you can never go wrong with having a bowl of veggie crudité's and hummus on the side.

**2. Prepare ahead:** Choose dishes that you can prepare ahead of time so you can maximise the time with your guests and have food ready for their arrival.

**3. Short on time:** Delegate! Ask your friends to bring a dish/drink.

**4. Christmas scents:** Personally I love popping something in the oven prior to my guests arriving that smells really Christmasy. A batch of my Christmas Crunch granola (which you could package up for friends to take home with them) with its warming Christmas spices of cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg or clove, or have my Mulled Apple Mocktail simmering away on the stove.

**5. Light a seasonal candle:** Use a room spray or pop on the diffuser. To maximise christmasy vibes look for scents with cinnamon, pine trees, ginger, peppermint, vanilla, and mistletoe.

**6. Make your own pomander balls** (oranges pierced with cloves): As the oranges dry, they release a citrusy aroma. Simply plan out your design before inserting cloves into the oranges (if you have trouble inserting the cloves, pierce the skin of the orange first with a cocktail stick). Dress with ribbons and display in clusters with branches of holly.

**7. Lots of blankets:** Make your guests feel relaxed and at home with a selection of blankets that they can wrap up and get cosy.

**8. Christmas playlist:** Create a playlist of your favourite layback Christmas tunes that can be enjoyed in the background.

**9. Start the party with a warming mocktail:** Your guests might be chilly from the journey over. Serve up my Mulled Apple Mocktail and invite your guests to make themselves at home.

**10. Relax and Enjoy:** Remember this party is for you too! If you've prepared ahead of time then you should be enjoying the party as much as your guests. There is no need to clean-up or be stuck in the kitchen during the evening. Create an environment where your guests know they can help themselves and remember no washing-up/tidying during the evening (the tidy up should be minimal if you stick with canapes - opt for napkins rather than plates!)



# Christmas Hosting

## 5 Recipes for Chilled Christmas Parties

### RECIPE MENU

Mulled Apple Mocktail

Mushroom and Lentil

Sausage Rolls

Aubergine Parcels

Nutty Clusters

Festive Ginger Bites

Christmas Crunch  
Granola

Each of the recipes in this plan is perfect for relaxed Christmas party hosting. Have the Mulled Apple Mocktail simmering away on the stove, the Sausages Rolls fresh out of the oven, the Aubergine Parcels sprinkled with fresh mint and jewels of pomegranate, and your choice of sweet treat in the fridge ready to indulge your guests. It also includes my Christmas Crunch Granola, package up for an edible gift to-go for your guests.

All of the recipes can be prepared ahead and don't require plates (yay to no washing up!), this means you can sit back, relax and enjoy the evening.

*Love Ev xxx*



## MULLED APPLE MOCKTAIL

Servings: 2 | Time to create: 20 minutes

*Looking for a warming Christmas tippie without the booze? Then this simple spiced mocktail is for you! Perfect way to warm-up after a winter walk or make a big batch before your friends arrive. Your home will smell amazing and your guests will love it too!*

### METHOD

1. Pour the apple juice into a non-stick pan and add 50ml of the non-alcoholic gin.
2. Cut one of the oranges into quarters, and press 3 cloves into the skin of each of the quarters (evenly spaced). Add the orange quarters to the pan.
3. Cut a couple of thin slices of the ginger (leaving the skin on) and add to the pan along with the cinnamon sticks.
4. Add a splash of maple syrup and bring the mixture to a gentle simmer for approximately 10-15 minutes.
5. Take the mocktail off the heat and using a sieve remove the orange, cinnamon and ginger from the liquid.
6. Decant the remaining liquid into 2 glasses, add a light dusting of nutmeg and your choice of garnish.

### INGREDIENTS

- 250ml good quality apple juice
- 50ml non-alcoholic gin ([Seedlip Spice 94](#))
- 1 unwaxed oranges
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- Whole cloves
- Fresh ginger (3-4 thin slices)
- Nutmeg (for dusting)
- Splash of maple syrup or honey for sweetness

***Top tip:** Garnish the mocktails with slices of orange (that can sit on the glasses), pierced with cloves.*



## MUSHROOM AND LENTIL SAUSAGE ROLLS

Servings: 8 | Time to create: 40 minutes

### METHOD

1. Pre-heat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/425°F/Gas 6.
2. Place the porcini mushrooms in a bowl and cover with boiling water and leave for 10 minutes.
3. Heat the oil in a pan and add the onion and garlic. Cook over a medium heat for 5-8 minutes.
4. Pulse the mushrooms in a blender and then add to the pan, cooking for a further 5 mins.
5. Drain the porcini mushrooms and finely dice. Add to the pan along with the tamari, and thyme leaves. Cook over a medium heat until the liquid has evaporated.
6. Add the cashew nuts to the blender and pulse until the nuts resemble breadcrumbs.
7. Once the liquid has evaporated, add the cashews and the lentils. Season and cook for a further 5 minutes.
8. Cut the pre-prepared puff pastry in half length ways to create 2 long rectangles. Spoon the mushroom mixture slightly off centre down each of the rectangles. Use 1 tbsp of almond milk to lightly moisten the long edge of the pastry. Wrap the short side of the pastry around the filling and then wrap the long side around the filling and over the top of the short side to close.
9. Roll the rectangles over (so the fold is underneath) and cut each rectangle into 8 rolls. Mix together the almond milk and agave syrup to make a glaze, coating each of the rolls. Sprinkle with sesame seeds. Place onto 2 lined baking trays and pop in the oven for 20-25 minutes (until golden). Leave to cool slightly before serving!

### INGREDIENTS

- Ready rolled puff pastry (375g)
- 1 red onion (finely diced)
- 2 garlic cloves (crushed)
- 300g chestnut mushrooms
- 7g dried porcini mushrooms
- 100g cashew nuts
- 250g puy cooked lentils
- 6 sprigs of thyme (leaves)
- 2 tbsp tamari
- 3 tbsp almond milk
- 1 tsp agave syrup
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds
- Salt and pepper to taste

*Top Tip: Delicious served with caramelised onion chutney.*



## AUBERGINE PARCELS

Servings: 18 | Time to create: 30 minutes

*Not just a feast for the taste buds, our Aubergine Parcels are a visual symphony, making them the perfect centerpiece for your festive table! They can be prepared ahead of time and then garnished just before your guests arrive.*

### METHOD

1. Brush the slices of aubergine with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Heat a griddle pan over a high heat and cook the slices in batches, roughly 2-3 minutes on each side until charred.
2. Add the za'atar, 60g of the pomegranate seeds, half of the mint leaves, the crumbled feta and lemon juice into a mixing bowl and stir until well combined.
3. Place a spoonful of the mixture on each slice of aubergine, roll up and secure with a cocktail stick.
4. Serve warm or at room temperature, garnished with the remaining fresh mint, pomegranate seeds and drizzle with tahini.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 aubergines, sliced lengthways into 5mm-thick slices
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp za'atar seasoning
- 1 x 80g pack of pomegranate seeds
- 1 x 30g pack chopped mint leaves
- 2 tbsp tahini
- 300g of crumbled greek feta
- Juice of 1 lemon

***Top tips:** If you don't have time to prepare and grill the aubergine, you could make pitta chips instead. Cut open the pitta, cut in half, then into 3 triangles. Place in a single layer on a baking tray and drizzle enough olive oil to generously coat each chip. Sprinkle sea salt and cumin and roast for 5 to 8 minutes, until golden and crisp.*





## NUTTY CLUSTERS

Servings: 12 | Time to create: 30 minutes

*Not only do these make a great sweet option for your Christmas party table, but they also make the perfect homemade gift. Pop in a Kilner Jar and add a bow for that last minute gift.*

### METHOD

1. Roast the almonds in an oven at 180 C for approximately 10 minutes.
2. Leave the almonds to cool.
3. Roughly chop the almonds and pistachios in half.
4. Melt the dark chocolate using a Bain-marie.
5. Add the almonds, pistachios and goji berries to a mixing bowl and pour over the melted chocolate. Gently mix together so that the mixture is evenly coated.
6. Line a baking tray with parchment paper and drop spoonfuls of the mixture onto the paper, roughly creating circle shapes. Continue until all the mixture is used. Dust with coconut if desired.
7. Pop in the fridge for approximately 30 minutes until hardened.
8. Store in an air tight container.

### INGREDIENTS

- 75g almonds
- 25g pistachios
- 20g goji berries
- 125g dark chocolate
- Desiccated coconut (optional)

***Top tips:** Spray with edible gold glitter to make them look extra fancy!*

# Sweet



## FESTIVE GINGER BITES

Servings: 12 | Time to create: 30 minutes

*These Festive Gingerbread Bites are simple to make, no cooking required, let your blender do the hard work! They are naturally sweetened with Medjool dates, chewy and soft. Like the Nutty Clusters, these bites make a great homemade gift.*

### METHOD

1. Place all the ingredients, minus the hazelnuts, into a blender. Blitz until the mixture forms a dough.
2. Place the dough in the fridge for 30 minutes.
3. Take small handfuls of the mixture in between your palms and firmly press and roll into balls. Roll each ball in the ground hazelnuts so that they are evenly coated.
4. Option to drizzle each ball in melted dark chocolate. Top with one cranberry and two sunflower seeds (pushing slightly into each ball).

### INGREDIENTS

- 120g Medjool dates
- 50g ground almonds
- 50g oats
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp ground clove
- ½ tbsp fresh ginger grated
- 30g ground hazelnuts
- To decorate: melted dark chocolate, cranberries and sunflower seeds

***Top tips:** If you don't have fresh ginger you could substitute with 1 tsp of ground ginger (it just won't pack as much punch!) The Medjool dates make these balls a little more indulgent and sweeter, however if you don't have Medjool dates you could use everyday dried dates. If they are a little hard soak in a bowl of boiling water for 10 minutes before draining.*

# To Go



## CHRISTMAS CRUNCH GRANOLA

Servings: 4 small jars | Time to create: 40 minutes

*Golden oat clusters with warm Christmas spices and maple/medjool sweetness with red goji berries (swap for cranberries if you prefer!). Make a big batch of our Christmas Crunch Granola before your guests arrive. The house will smell great and you can fill jars with the granola for your guests for a delicious gift to-go.*

### METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180C (350F), fan setting. Line a baking tray with parchment paper.
2. Place the dates and maple syrup in a blender and blitz until it forms a paste.
3. Place the oats, pumpkin seeds, chia seeds, pecans and spices into a large mixing bowl and stir until well combined. Add the date paste, melted coconut oil and juice from the orange. Mix well until well combined.
4. Evenly spread the mixture over the parchment paper.
5. Bake for 30 minutes, stirring every 8-10 minutes, until golden (be careful not to burn the granola on the edges).
6. Leave to cool slightly before adding the goji berries (or cranberries!)

### INGREDIENTS

- 250g old fashioned oats
- 200g medjool dates (stones removed)
- 100g pecans
- 100g goji berries
- 60g pumpkin seeds
- 2 tbsp chia seeds
- 50g coconut oil (melted)
- 8 tbsp maple syrup
- 4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp ground clove
- Juice of 1 orange
- To add once baked: 60g of dried fruit (we used a mixture of raisins, golden raisins and cranberries).

***Top tips:** The Medjool dates make these balls a little more indulgent and sweeter, however if you don't have Medjool dates you could use everyday dried dates. If they are a little hard soak in a bowl of boiling water for 10 minutes before draining.*