

Tackle Thanksgiving's "Meal Before The Meal" In Style This Year

Keep Guests Upbeat and Engaged With New Appetizer & Hors D'Oeuvre Sets From CSNStores.com

Though Thanksgiving culminates with the much-anticipated and celebrated turkey dinner, the holiday still means much more than just a meal – it's an all-day, family-bonding event.

The dinner itself, because it's the centerpiece of the gathering, is planned, prepped and anticipated for days. However, many families, distracted by the turkey and side dishes, can overlook the ever-important hours that precede the feast. But this year, CSNStores.com wants to make sure everyone knows what's new and most impressive in serving ware this year, to set the right mood before the turkey comes out of the oven.

"While your choices of appetizers and hors d'oeuvres must have enough variety to please everyone, what you actually serve them in can also play a huge role in either impressing or depressing the guests," said CSN Cookware Expert Meg Jenkins. "Even for family members, if you offer them food in something new and trendy, it shows that you care enough to entertain them with fashionable, up-to-date items. Your serving ware can give guests a big hint about how you actually feel about them."

While Jenkins believes integrating some very traditional items, family heirlooms, perhaps, into the serving routine can evoke nostalgia and warm feelings, updating the overall look of the serving arrangement can bring even more attention to the treasured items, while also conveying a sense of celebration and prosperity. After all, we're already eight years into the new century -- it's time to ensure your dining ware no longer looks like last century's hand-me-downs.

Here are Jenkins' recommendations for items that could really help to infuse fun, elegance and even a little bit of frivolity into pre-feast family bonding:

Libbey's Tailgate Drinkware Set - \$24.99



For many families, the Turkey Day football games can be as big as the meal. This appetizer set is ideal for the football-fanatic-family and features 6 23-oz. football-themed tumblers. Yet the items are elegant enough to add class to your pre-dinner, game-watching activities. This set is also great for higher-end tailgating, Super Bowl parties, and any time your favorite squad is on TV.

Le Creuset – Hors d'oeuvre Set in Kiwi - \$59.99

It's understood that the finest dinnerware, glassware, and utensils are used during Thanksgiving dinner. So why settle for plastic plates and old serving trays for the appetizers? Jenkins says that's a real pre-dinner "don't." Instead, she suggests relying on Le Creuset for the answer. In particular, this beautiful Hors d'oeuvre Set in Kiwi will garner smiles, compliments and maybe even polite conversation.



Crafted from durable stoneware, these pieces resist chipping, scratching, and staining and will enliven the look of any coffee table or counter. The dip bowl is separate from the tray, perfect for popping in the microwave or dishwasher. This set's generous size is ideal for large gatherings.



International Silver's 2-Tier Chip and Dip with Rack - \$27.65

Here's another perfect, future-forward and functional serving piece to dramatize the "meal before the meal."

This creatively engineered two-tier chip and dip set comes with a sleek, nickel plated rack and two ceramic bowls. Convenient and stylish, its simple design is ideal for the pre-feast gathering. A must have for any home; this set can also function as an inviting centerpiece with floating candles and cut flowers when not in use.

Blomus - Enza Five-Piece Dip Bowl Set with Tray - \$66.23

With four different porcelain bowls and a stainless steel tray, the **brand new** Enza Five-Piece Dip Bowl Set will really tell your guests that you think they're not only special, but that they have a truly refined sense of style and design. This modern set stylishly provides guests with an array of salsa, dips, and sauces. Function and "foodie fashion" blend harmoniously as the porcelain bowls add a nice touch to the sturdy stainless steel tray they call "home." This beautiful piece is sure to endear itself to guests for years to come.



Pfaltzgraff - Evening Sun 4.25" Appetizer Plate (Set of 6) - \$29.99

WOW. This stunning and unconventional stoneware set is sure to bring warmth and color to your gathering. Rich oranges, fiery reds, and a cool, yet classy sage green complement and highlight the sunny yellow splashes cascading over Pfaltzgraff's signature speckled glaze. This set is as durable and enduring, as it is elegant. And with six plates included, this is perfect for big Thanksgivings.

“Ultimately, with any of these wonderful, new pieces and lines,” Jenkins concluded, “you’ll show your guests how much you appreciate their love and friendship. You’ll certainly give them plenty to ‘ooh’ and ‘ahh’ about before the big feast, as well. In fact, chances are they’ll be talking about your great serving ware well into the turkey meal itself and might even ask you where you can get similar pieces.”

So to make Thanksgiving '08 a celebration that marries elegance with fond emotions, start with new, stylish serving ware and the rest will be gravy.

For additional information, interviews with our Cookware Expert Meg Jenkins, or hi-res JPEGs, please contact Will Flanagan at wflanagan@csnstores.com or at 617.502.7051.

