

HOW TO: HOST A FREEDOM DINNER

STEP 1: ASK

Life is ALWAYS better with friends. So ask a few to host WITH you. Everything will be easier and more fun together. Freedom Dinners are about the power of community so big sigh of relief here because this is not about you doing it alone!

STEP 2: PICK

Pick a date! What works for your Freedom Dinner Team? What works best for your climate? Now set that date and start working toward it!

STEP 3: CONNECT

The powerful thing about hosting a freedom dinner is that YOU are inviting your community to do it with you. Every element on the table, food on the menu is an opportunity for an individual or a business to do what they do best in a way that fights for freedom! Think about who you and your friends personally know that cooks, bakes, grows flowers, hand lettering, gardening, catering or wine making and ask them to join your dinner team! Personal connections are the strongest so start with people you know!

STEP 4: DECIDE

Now that you have an idea of what is being donated it's time to decide on the big details : how many people are you inviting (what's the max that will fit at your table), what will the menu be and what do you want your dinner to look like.

STEP 5: COSTS

We suggest a \$75 ticket price for each seat at the table. This helps to cover any additional costs you might have for the food, beverages and decor. Once your costs are covered all of the proceeds Go to Rescue:Freedom! We have a Freedom Dinner Donation page all set up for you to send your donation thru. Email us and we'll help you get set up!

STEP 6: BUDGET

Even with community donations we spend an average of \$300 per 25 person dinner for the extra costs of food, flowers, or drinks. Having a budget helps keep you from buying extras that may not be necessary, which means more money to those that need it!

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STEP 7: TICKETS

Have each guest pay for their ticket in advance in order to reserve a seat. Tickets are non refundable - this ensures that the night is a fundraising success. If people have to cancel last minute tell them to give their seat to a friend!

STEP 8: INVITE

You're ready to invite! Create your invitation so it tells your guests why you're hosting the dinner, who they'll be helping by purchasing a seat, how they can pay for their ticket, what the menu will be, and of course time and date!

STEP 9: SAVE A SEAT

Your community hasn't seen a Freedom Dinner in action yet, they need your personal invite! Just like you would invite a friend to dinner, personally invite your friends and family to fill the table. Tell them you've saved a seat just for them, share about the impact the dinner is making not just for those trapped in Human Trafficking, but for your community too. There is something powerful that happens when people feel a personal connection.

STEP 10: LISTS

Make the shopping, decor and detail lists. You might have a lot of what you need already in your cupboards. Now think about dishes, goblets, coffee servers, cups, candles, napkins, decor, flowers, chairs and tables.

STEP 11: DONATIONS

Touch base about donations and keep inviting people to be a part. We have found that neighbors and friends LOVE giving towards the meal via their vegetable or flower gardens, making homemade beer or baking special desserts. You name it! Now that you know exactly what you're serving be really specific with any additional needs. Invite people to be part of the evening in the exact way that they are already living life. Keep a running list of everyone who is donating and volunteering so you can be sure to give a big thank you! We put a list of the names and donations on the menus so each guest can see everyone that made the dinner possible.

STEP 12: SEATING

Confirm RSVPs and make your seating chart. This will be HUGE in making the night seamless and less awkward for guests. People tend to want to sit next to the person they came with and across from someone they know.

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STEP 13: TIMELINE

Look through your menu and what you need to set up to be sure to have enough time for prepping the day of. Then create the timeline for the event so your entire team knows what is needed and when.

STEP 14: SHOP

Do all of the final shopping 3 days before the dinner. Pick up the final food items, flowers and double check your decor (candles? lighter?). This is a great day to pick up extra donations, or ask that any dinner donations be dropped off at your place by this date. Giving people clear direction helps make it happen!

STEP 15: PREP

Set aside the entire day before the dinner to prep. Go through each recipe and prepare it as much as possible. Label the prepped food in your fridge to keep it straight! Set up the table down to the last details of place cards, candles and flowers. Set up the appetizer and drink area, get candles, drinks and decor ready.

STEP 16: DAY OF!

Get yourself ready as early as possible so you are free to do the final prepping and setting up. This is where your timeline comes in handy, you'll know exactly what to do and when.

STEP 17: TEAM MEETING

Pause all of the last minute details and bring the entire team together. Take a few moments to talk through the timeline for the evening, who will be doing what and then remind everyone that this is not about hosting a perfect evening, it's about creating community and giving freedom. Have Fun, you're creating something beautiful and life giving!

STEP 18: DINNER TIME

Turn on the music (I love picking a jazz station), light the candles, and get ready to greet your guests. Once everyone has arrived, do a pre-dinner cheers to thank everyone for coming, tell them how they are changing lives then enjoy an incredible night with your community gathered around your table.

We can't wait to hear about your Freedom Dinner! Be sure to tag us so we can follow along.

#freedomdinners
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