

The Dinner Guests You Wish You Hadn't Invited

Written by Margaret Evans
Monday, 18 April 2016 12:46



Dear L. A. Plume,

What do you say to someone who insisted upon bringing a dish to a dinner party, and you have planned your menu to include that dish, and then the guest shows up without it?

Annie

Dear Annie,

The first time it happens you say nothing; you should always have something in your pantry or freezer that will fill the gap. If you invite that person again, then you might want to remind them ahead of time how much you're looking forward to whatever it is they want to bring.

L. A. Plume

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Dear Ms. Plume,

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How would you respond when you've invited someone to dinner, they accept, then ask who else is on the guest list so you tell them . . . and then they just don't show up?

Frosted

Dear Frosted,

Once you have ascertained that they weren't in a car wreck, or lying in a pool of blood somewhere, you respond by never inviting them to your house again.

L. A. Plume

Dear L. A. Plume,

What do you say to someone who, when you invite them to dinner, asks what you are serving before they respond to the invitation?

Kent

Dear Kent,

You may answer that question with the question, "Why, do you have food allergies?" And if they do, then it was a legitimate question, which would have been better stated by saying, "I'd love to

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come to dinner but I'm allergic to shellfish," or "I'm a vegetarian." If someone has been invited to your home for a meal you are preparing for them, it is just rude to ask what is being served. You could tell them that you really haven't decided on the menu yet, or you could say, "Oh just the usual, dolled-up dog food and a store-bought dessert."

L. A. Plume

Dear L.A. Plume,

What do you do when someone promises to pick up someone else and bring him to your dinner party, because he can't drive at night, and then the person who promised forgets to pick up the other person, and sending him, or someone else, back to do it will delay dinner considerably?

Frankie

Dear Frankie,

Well you certainly have to collect the missing guest somehow. The person who forgot him should be the one to go back and dinner will just have to wait. If it would work geographically, the most expeditious thing would be for the forgetful guest to send an Uber to pick up the missing guest and charge it to his own account. I might ask to hold his car keys so he can't leave without taking the guest home.

L. A. Plume

Dear Ms. Plume,

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I have a dear friend I adore, but she is a terrible cook. Whenever she comes for dinner, she brings something she's made and insists upon adding it to the table. I work hard on my menus and preparation and I just don't want people to think I've made whatever it is she's brought. How can I politely tell her not to put it on the table?

Jayne

Dear Jayne,

You are sounding a little prissy here, missy. She's brought you a gift of love; when you sit down to dinner simply thank her immediately for her contribution and no one will mistake that you made it, or catch you being rude to a guest and a friend.

L. A. Plume