

Gourmet Club

An Interest Group of the University Club "The Best Restaurant in Town!"

The Gourmet Club is an interest group for people who love good food, relish the challenge of trying new recipes, and enjoy the company of like-minded friends. Each member attends four dinners during the year, typically with eight to ten other Club members --- at each, there is an assigned host, along with a co-host and guests. In addition, there are opening and closing events for the entire Gourmet Club membership.

WHO CAN BE MEMBERS:

Individuals are encouraged to join Gourmet Club as "cooking couples," to share cooking and hosting assignments and for ease of scheduling. There can also be "solo" members, but for scheduling purposes, it is preferred that such individuals team up with another "solo."

EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS:

The Club is cooperative and its purpose is to explore gourmet cooking and sample new recipes. The following are some minimal expectations for all members so the work of the Club is shared and maintained:

1. You are expected to plan and host one dinner per year sometime within the two months assigned to you. Details follow.
2. When you are the host, please schedule your dinner within the assigned months. If this is not possible because of conflicts among your guests' schedules, please make every effort to re-schedule your dinner as soon as possible at an alternate time. It may be that occasionally no common date can be reached. Then the host selects a date agreeable to most assigned guests.
3. Hosts plan the menu and copy all the recipes for their guests. "Cooking couples" are usually given a recipe(s) to prepare together. "Solo" members each receive a recipe to prepare as an individual. Details are found on the other side.
4. Dinners are planned with the idea that guests create and serve the recipe that has been assigned to them. Please consult the host before changing anything in the recipe or if there are any problems with it.
5. Occasionally, there may be a year or two when people cannot participate as full members, so there is an Alternates List. Alternate status (for a maximum of two years) is reserved for members who have previously been full members. Alternates are encouraged to return to full status as soon as they can.

HOW GOURMET CLUB WORKS

You will be invited to four dinners during the year. You will have a different role at each:

1. Every cooking couple in the Gourmet Club is a **“host”** for one dinner during the year. As a host, you are responsible for the dinner menu, selecting recipes and dividing the food preparation among the guests scheduled to attend. The host copies the recipes for the menu and distributes the entire packet in advance to everyone attending the dinner. (Try to include recipe sources whenever possible.)
2. Each cooking couple is also a **“co-host”** for another dinner during the year. As co-host, you are usually assigned the main course. Please also help out the host in any other way possible. The host prepares the house, but the co-host can help with extra stemware, dishes, utensils, etc. if needed.
3. For the remaining two dinners, each cooking couple attends as one of the **“guests”** and prepares dishes as assigned by the host.

SCHEDULING: The host is responsible for finding a date and time acceptable to all the members assigned to their dinner during the two months scheduled for their party.

- √ Hosts should contact their co-host and guests **very early** in the year to schedule their dinner — calendars fill up very quickly!

- *Hosts who fail to hold their party may be asked to assume “alternate” status for the following year.*

- √ If finding a common date among your assigned guests is impossible, you may invite another Club member and/or invite other friends instead. If you have sufficient space in your home, adding other guests to your dinner is also OK.
- √ If you find that you are unable to attend your dinner after the date has been set, **immediately** let the host know and help find an alternate.
- √ Please be **ON TIME** for your assigned dinners. Arriving late throws an entire evening into disarray.

EXPENSES: Dinner and Opening and Closing Party expenses are shared among the guests. Tally your expenses (guests do not usually charge for seasonings or staples) and bring the total cost to your dinner. **Please be prepared to pay in cash.** The cost of the dinners has been about \$25 per person, but it can be lower or higher depending on the menu and the wines selected.

- √ The host is responsible for selecting and providing beverages. At the Opening and Closing parties, everyone brings 1-2 bottles of wine or beverages to share.
- √ Wines and aperitifs are generally considered part of the dinner expenses unless your group determines otherwise in advance.

A NOTE ON MENU'S: When selecting a menu and assigning recipes, hosts should note special requirements such as labor intensity or the availability of ingredients/utensils. The host should account for special ingredients or utensils. ***If the recipe you receive poses a problem for you, please talk with your host before making changes or substitutions.***