



QUALITY + DESIGN

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2009 | TWIN CITIES EDITION

An **Angie's list** publication



Photo courtesy of Eve Events LLC
An event planner can coordinate
a holiday party that will impress
the most discerning guests.

Stress less, *in any event*

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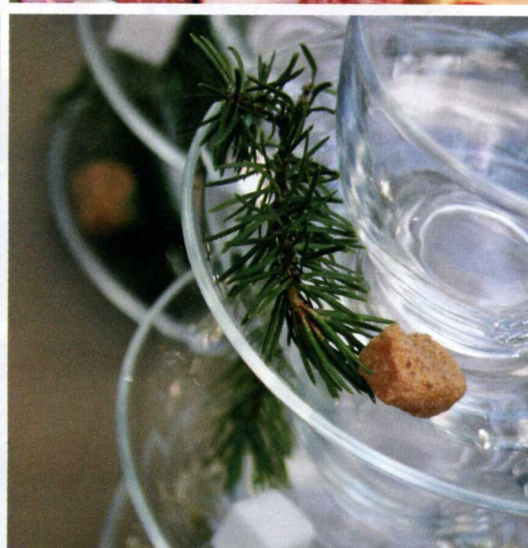
by Jackie Norris

Eden Prairie resident Ann Anklam planned lavish holiday parties on her own for years. But when a guest spilled red wine on the carpet, she found herself in a frenzy, scrubbing the floor in her dress. Anklam says she and her husband love to entertain, but decided to replace the panic with peace of mind by hiring an event planner. "There was no way I could be everywhere and keep up with all my guests," Anklam says. "I used to stress out about everything, but now I can simply be the hostess and enjoy my own party."

Anklam, an officer on the board of directors with the Park Square Theatre in St. Paul, chose Hire a Host in Minneapolis to plan her 60-person holiday party last year and has started making



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arrangements for an encore performance this year. People like Anklam use event planners to save their sanity, time and money, while also adding details that make a party unforgettable. “I didn’t have to worry,” Anklam says. “They made my life easy and the event planner immediately became a comforting friend.”

Hire a Host set Anklam’s mind at ease by meeting with her two months in advance to discuss her budget and needs. They also sent out the invitations, interviewed caterers and florists, and rented the linens and dishes. Melanie Vejdani, president and founder of Hire a Host, says event planners wear a lot of hats, from greeting guests, taking their coats, getting them drinks and even making sure there’s enough toilet paper in every bathroom. “You really have to walk through the entire party and think about it from the guests’ perspective,” Vejdani says. “That’s how you pull off a great event.”

To ensure Anklam’s party received rave reviews, Vejdani’s staff played cheerful holiday music and strategically placed fresh floral arrangements and candles

around her home, so the sounds and smells of the season would fill nearly every room. “They had all the candles lit before the guests even arrived,” Anklam says. “It made the party feel so warm and enchanting — like something you’d see on television.” Although it seemed simple, Anklam says the glowing candlelight made a big impact on her and her guests. “Everyone kept commenting on how lovely our home was,” she says. “It really made my husband and I proud.”

Experts say most people overlook the small details when they plan a party themselves. “An event planner takes it up a level and even considers how the traffic should flow through your home,” says Laura Mullen, president and lead designer for Laura Mullen Event Design in Minneapolis. She says the extra steps she takes helps to avoid potential disasters like crowding and inadequate seating. “Since it’s your home, you may never consider these things to be an issue,” Mullen says. But she says addressing the particulars won’t go unnoticed by guests.

Photos (top and bottom left) courtesy of Happily Ever After Photography, photo (bottom right) courtesy of Laura Mullen Event Design

