

Entertaining Ideas

Adding A Personal Touch To Your Parties

(NAPSA)—Let's get personal. That's what many party planners are saying when they make plans to host one-of-a-kind parties such as a bridal shower, baby shower or even a Mother's Day brunch.

Adding a personal touch may be easier than you imagine. Here are some ideas you can use:

- **Make your centerpiece stand out.** Don't limit yourself to flowers. Centerpieces can consist of anything that fits into the theme of the event. For visual interest, you can use a large glass bowl with goldfish swimming in it. You can cluster candles or float votives in water. For a baby shower, you can build a pyramid of baby blocks.

- **Create unique place cards that mean something to the guest of honor.** For a bridal shower, attach name tags to a cookie cutter at each place setting. For a baby shower, order custom cookies in the shape of teddy bears with the person's name iced on to them.

- **Decorate with a theme.** Start by deciding on the colors and the theme. Is your mom a gardener? If you're planning on a brunch for Mother's Day or her birthday, decorate the room with flowers cut out of construction paper. Make a chocolate cake covered in flowers made out of candies.

For a romantic bridal shower, decorate with hearts. Buy a miniature tree. Ask each guest to write something on a paper heart and use these hearts to decorate the tree. Make garlands of hearts.

Make a party that's all one color. For example, if the bride-



Adding a few personal touches to an event you're hosting can make it even more memorable.

to-be loves lavender, ask your guests to bring something in that color.

- **Party favors should be fun.** Keep party favors in the same theme as the rest of the party—such as seed packets for a garden party, candles for a party that relies on them for decoration. Or you can give out lottery tickets at any party celebrating a person's good fortune.

- **Don't forget the cookies.** Cookies can be very useful in personalizing a party, either as the dessert or as creative place cards.

Good for any special occasion or holiday, you can make a bouquet out of cookies or even give them out as party favors. Do-it-yourself cookie kits, such as those from Cookies by Design, can take a lot of the mess out of this process.

Besides the kits, the company offers fresh-baked hand-decorated cookie bouquets, individual decorated cookies, pan cookies, and other deliciously edible gifts. Learn more at www.cookiesbydesign.com.