



Dinner Dialogue Hosts: FAQs



Thank you for volunteering to be a host for the Amazing Faiths Project Dinner Dialogue in your area. Below are some FAQs about hosting one of the dinner dialogues. Please feel free to contact your community organizers with any other concerns or questions you may have.

1. Who are the hosts?

Hosts are individuals or couples (spouses, partners, friends, roommates, etc.) who volunteer their home for the Dinner Dialogue. In volunteering, they are agreeing to provide the space and the meal for the evening event.

2. Where are the dinners hosted? Where do they take place?

A private home is the best setting for the Dinner Dialogue. A private home is personal and intimate; a person who opens their home and invites strangers for a meal makes an extraordinary statement of hospitality and acceptance, which creates a powerful context for the dinner event. Hosting the dinner event at a restaurant or other public place is strongly discouraged. Additionally, hosting the dinner event in a large fellowship hall or community room with people seated at tables in groups of 8 – 10 is strongly discouraged. Such settings do not capture the required "feel" of the Amazing Faiths Project Dinner Dialogue, and will not accomplish the outcomes for the event.

3. Do I need a big house or space to host a dinner?

Not at all. Hosts need not have a large house, nor do they need to prepare fancy food in order to host the Dinner Dialogue. Seating at a dining table, on portable TV trays, or around a living room on coffee tables is fine. The main requirement is that everyone share the meal together, and be able to see and hear each other easily during the meal.

4. What do hosts provide other than my home or space?

Hosts volunteer to provide a meal for the group; however, the menu need not be expensive or "fancy." A simple, nutritious VEGETARIAN meal is all that is required. "Vegetarian" means NO red meat, poultry, seafood or any other animal flesh. Hosts should also observe the following restrictions:

- No alcohol of any kind, either as a beverage or cooked into the food
- No pork or pork products
- No shellfish (shrimp, lobster, scallops, etc.)
- No peanuts or peanut products
- Nothing too spicy (or offer a non-spicy alternative or let people add their own spice)

Additional dietary restrictions that participants may have will be emailed to the host in advance of the dinner. The host should feel free to contact the program coordinator if s/he does not know how to meet a certain dietary requirement.

5. What are the best foods to serve?

Anything that meets the above restrictions is fine. Easy sample menus could include any of the following items, alone or in combination:

- Veggies and pasta, beans and rice, stir fry veggies and rice, veggie soup and salad
- Bread and make-your-own salad bar
- Water, lemonade, fruit juices, caffeine-free soft drinks, tea and/or coffee
- Cookies, brownies or fruit for dessert

6. Do I need to rent table settings or other dinner items?

No. Just use what you have in your home. Or, you may use disposable plates, cups and serving utensils.

7. What if people have special dietary restrictions?



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Your local organizers will provide hosts with assistance in meeting any special dietary requests of guests, i.e. kosher, halal or other such needs. Guests are asked to list their dietary restrictions on the sign-up forms, so that information will be passed along to hosts. Work closely with your local organizers to meet any of your guests' needs.

8. Are hosts allowed to participate in the "dialogue" part of the dinner dialogue?

Yes and No. We don't recommend that hosts participate because they may need to tend to hosting duties and become distracted or miss part of the conversation – thus not fully engaging in the appreciative listening the Dinner Dialogues foster. However, it is possible for hosts to participate. If you want to participate, tell your local organizers and the moderator (once you have one) if you plan to be a participant in the dialogue in addition to serving as a host. The moderators are the "leaders" of the evening; they and the local organizers need to have a sense of the exact number of people who will be doing the dialogue in order to keep the evening on time and on track.

9. May I invite other friends or neighbors to the dinner?

Yes and No. Please encourage everyone you know to participate in the Dinner Dialogues by registering themselves either as a guest or as a host. However, please do not invite unregistered people to your dinner. This is not a typical "social" event; it is a carefully constructed dialogue event. Much effort and attention is paid to the exact guest list for each host home in order to provide maximum religious diversity among the guests. Moreover, the dialogue doesn't work as well if people know each other prior to the event; therefore, please do not invite your friends or neighbors to attend without registering.

10. May my spouse, partner or roommate participate as a guest in the dinner dialogue we are hosting?

Yes. Just make sure your local organizers know this and your guest registers. This is a common request and it works quite nicely in practice; one person provides the "host" duties, and the other person participates as a "guest." The couple gets the benefit of both experiences.

11. Are hosts obligated to host these guests again after the dinner event?

Not at all. Many of the groups continue to meet in the weeks and months after the dinner; however, they meet in the homes of others in the group, in restaurants or at other events in their area. Hosts are not obligated to host anything at all after the dinner event. Moreover, hosts are not obligated to meet again at all with the people in their group.

12. Photography

We ask that hosts take on the responsibility of photographing the event if they feel comfortable doing so. This will help take responsibility off the moderator for this task. Please see **Photo Guidelines** document for instructions. Let Program Director know if you don't feel comfortable or don't have camera/good camera on phone.

13. Advice from previous hosts:

- Have everything done 15 minutes prior to guest arrival, as some guests may arrive early.
- Also expect that some guests may arrive late.

For more information, please contact:

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