



Cheers!

Life & Home

...TO A HOLIDAY FETE that tweaks tradition with inspired twists on *décor*, drinks, *hors d'oeuvres*—even *trees*—from the best event planners and designers coast to coast



The Snack

CLASSIC: ROASTED CHESTNUTS
NEW CLASSIC: SOPHISTICATED SALTY NIBBLES

Turn standard snacks into showstoppers, suggests N.Y.C. eco-friendly event planner **Danielle Venokur**. Toss popcorn with truffle oil, salt and pepper or add chopped parsley, roasted with olive oil and sea salt until crispy. To dress up potato chips sprinkle Parmesan cheese and paprika on gourmet chips spread on a cookie sheet, then bake for five minutes at 350°F. Great presentation for a pair of snacks: A tall glass vase inside a glass bowl is a smart-looking dual dish.

photographed by DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN

The Drink

CLASSIC: EGGNOG
NEW CLASSIC: PINK POMEGRANATE COCKTAIL

L.A. event designer Diann Valentine, who has created parties for Usher and Toni Braxton, likes a "fresh spin on a Belini": vodka with pomegranate and pink-grapefruit juices topped with champagne. Serve over ice (tumbler, \$2, crateandbarrel.com); pair with her Kahlúa pecans: 3 cups nuts tossed with 1 cup Kahlúa, ½ cup brown sugar and 2 tbsp butter, baked for 10 minutes at 350°F.

