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*"Its not about how much we give but how much love  
we put into giving"*

*- Mother Theresa*



## A Warm and Cozy Home for a Warm and Cozy Winter

As the days get shorter and the cold weather approaches, now is a perfect time to make your home feel cozy and inviting – add some specialness to your everyday moments. To elicit that tiny sigh of relief when you or your guests walk into your home, a few little adjustments can make a huge difference.

- Turn a couch or chair into an invitation to snuggle up with fluffy pillows, snuggly blankets, and a place to set a warm drink and a good book.
- Bring in warm light. While daylight bulbs can feel a little stark or cold, warm white light bulbs can feel cozy and, well, warm at night. Add to the cozy vibe with indirect lighting, string lights, candles, and fireplaces.
- Bring nature inside with evergreen boughs, pinecones, dried oranges and cinnamon sticks, houseplants, interesting stones, fresh flowers, and artwork. Reminders of the natural world help your space feel calm and grounded.
- Soften hard, cold surfaces with soft, warm textiles. Change out your breezy summer curtains for heavier drapes to make your space look warmer and feel warmer, as warm curtains will add insulation around windows. And place plush rugs in both walking and sitting areas.
- Make it personal; add pieces with memory, meaning, and sentiment. Put that old photo of grandma and grandpa in a special frame, put out that silly little figurine you bought on vacation, and set out a stack of storybooks you remember from your childhood.
- Appeal to your senses with yummy-smelling candles, soothing music, fuzzy slippers, and dimming light switches.
- Bake something wonderful. Whether it's fresh bread, pie, cookies, a roast dinner, or a pot of soup, cooking will warm up your kitchen, fill your home with wonderful scents, and taste amazing!
- Plan something cozy to do to help you unwind and connect. Bring out the board games, plan a family movie night, or snuggle up with a good book.

However you decide to cozy up your home this winter, fill it with things and people you love.



## Mini Meat Loaf Sheet-Pan Meal

tasteofhome.com

### Ingredients

- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup tomato juice
- 3/4 cup quick-cooking oats
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1-1/2 pounds lean ground beef
- 1/4 cup ketchup
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon prepared mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3 large potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper, divided
- 1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed and halved

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°. In a large bowl, combine eggs, tomato juice, oats, onion and salt. Add beef; mix lightly but thoroughly. Shape into six 4x2-1/2-in. loaves; place on a sheet pan or in a large shallow roasting pan. Combine ketchup, brown sugar, mustard and nutmeg; brush over loaves.
2. Combine potatoes with 2 tablespoons oil, 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper; toss to coat. Add to pan in a single layer. Bake loaves and potatoes 25 minutes.
3. Combine asparagus with remaining 1 tablespoon oil, 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper; toss to coat. Add to pan. Bake until a thermometer inserted into meat loaves reads 160° and vegetables are tender, 15-20 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.



## Dissuading Porch Pirates

www.rd.com

With gift-giving season at hand, it's a great time to evaluate your home package delivery setup. Porch pirates – thieves who watch for and take packages left outdoors by couriers – are most active around the holiday season.

Stolen packages are both a financial loss and a hassle to deal with, but there are steps you can take to outsmart porch pirates.

### Online

Some details can be managed at the time of purchase or through the courier's website. You can sign up for delivery alerts, require a signature for delivery, hold at the terminal, and leave specific delivery instructions for the driver.

### At Home

There are a few things you can do to dissuade would-be thieves right on your front porch.

To keep packages out of site, add some larger decorations to the porch that can camouflage a box or install a storm door, providing a hidden place for small packages between the doors. You could even build or buy a locking box specifically for deliveries or designate a space behind a bush.

Adding security works two-fold, both to deter a potential thief and to catch a successful one. If you can add an outdoor video camera or a doorbell camera, sometimes seeing it is enough to convince a thief that this house just isn't worth the risk. Some systems can be set up with motion detection, automatic lights, microphones, and alerts sent directly to your cell phone.

In the event a brave porch pirate takes your packages anyway, the video recording of them can help police identify the thief and make a case against them.

### Avoid the Porch

If you can't be home to gather your packages immediately after delivery, you may want to consider having them delivered someplace else.

Some websites offer a ship-to-store option, have Amazon lockers, or serve as delivery points for popular small-package delivery services.

If it's an option at your workplace, or with a neighbor who will be home, have your packages shipped there where there will be someone to receive the packages throughout the day.

If you're planning to receive a lot of packages, it may be worth the small fee to rent a delivery box at the nearest UPS, FedEx, or similar store for the season.



If you are currently working with another Broker please do not consider this solicitation

