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Angela Hartnett's friends are fortunate: the chef loves entertaining – and she approves of generous portions. These are the recipes she prepares for her inner circle

This is a perfect menu for close friends. For me, that's the group of four or six I tend to go on holiday with, but if the neighbours are around they might join us too. We were in Sicily recently so could get hold of tuna and borlotti beans easily, but there's no reason why you can't recreate what you enjoyed at home.

The dishes themselves are light and easy; only the baked celeriac with a lovely Montgomery cheddar cheese sauce is a bit heartier, and is something you could have on its own as a comforting supper, too. They reflect the fact that many people eat less red meat and a lot more veg these days – including me. I could eat courgettes until the cows come home, and thanks to the summer we've had, they've held out a little longer than usual. My husband, Neil, and I have even attempted to grow a few ourselves in the garden.

We always eat outside if the weather is nice, and I stick everything in big communal bowls in the middle of the table. I'm lazy like that – it makes everything so much easier when you come to serve up.

The number one thing I've learnt about hosting a great lunch at home is that generosity is key. You don't need to make enough food to last you through next week, but you certainly don't want to run out of anything. And make sure that any wine (or something alcohol-free) is nicely chilled for when people arrive.

If my guests are ringing the doorbell at 1pm, I know they won't be gone by 5pm, so I don't kid myself about an early finish. In fact, I know the meal will always end with us playing cards – rummy or yaviv, which is brilliantly addictive – until 10pm. Often I hold them off arriving until 4pm, so I can get things done. I'm always texting guests to say "give me another hour!"

I make the panna cotta in advance so I don't even have to think about them, and Neil makes the coffee for afterwards. He sometimes brings out



LAVISH

Tuna and borlotti salad, above; Hartnett podding beans at home, below

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the Fernet-Branca, which is always dangerous. I'm more likely to have a herbal tea and some cheese.

Our card games are always a nice way to relax, finish off the wine, and extend the time around the table. With everyone so glued to their phones these days it's great excuse to chat, laugh and have fun over good food.