



Gourmet shop owner and cookbook author Lesley Stowe holds one of her special cheese platters with garnishes, which would make an excellent snack selection for a New Year's Eve party. PHOTO BY MARK VAN MANEN/VANCOUVER SUN

attractive items like chestnuts, champagne corks or kumquats across the table — "anything that reflects the season."

THE ESSENTIALS

Finally, before you ring in 2007 with 100 of your closest friends, make sure you haven't forgotten these important party tips:

- Warn the neighbours beforehand. Better yet, invite them over, too.
- Provide plenty of non-alcoholic

beverages

■ Make sure you have an accurate clock or remember to turn on the TV when midnight approaches.

■ Provide party favours or noisemakers for the big moment. Or dole out the pots and pans and make a racket the old-fashioned way.

■ Make sure you have enough sparkling wine (or ginger ale for non-drinkers) for everyone at midnight.

■ After the 12 o'clock hooting and hollering, someone is sure to break into *Auld Lang Syne*. If you've forgot-

ten the words, here's as much as you'll need to know before tucking back into the bubbly:

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and auld lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear,
for auld lang syne,
we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.

THE END

Finally, make sure your guests have a safe way to get home. Call a taxi, put your non-drinking friends or family members to work, or call Operation Red Nose if you're in a neighbourhood that offers the pickup service. (Go to www.operationrednose.com for more info.)

Have a safe and happy New Year!
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