Make it brunch: Sunday before Santa

Make your's a brunch for the day after Christmas noon . . . and have the night for a high fling with friends.

Since brunch is the party that you begin at lunch time, it can be a happy combination of fine food, good drinks and close friends. But keep the party casual, even if you do, if you start now, have time for inspirational planning.

Casual doesn't mean simple. Make the service as elaborate as you wish. See that you have on hand such items as eggs, cheese, ham and bacon, cocktail sausages, mushrooms and caviar.

A holiday brunch menu, suggested by Smirnoff includes Beef Hash with Eggs, stuffed lobster tails, stuffed mushrooms, Holiday Fruit Bread . . . and, of course, the proper beverages.

To make the Beef Hash with Eggs combine two cups each of cubed roast beef and potatoes, a fourth cup each of minced onions and parsley, two tablespoons A-1 sauce, salt and pepper.

Brown in butter in skillet, then pack down to form crust. Top with poached eggs.

For stuffed lobster tails, par-boil frozen rock lobster tails according to package directions. Cut away soft undershell, split meat. Prepare a package stuffing mix as directed, adding two tablespoons chopped parsley. Fill and top lobster tails with stuffing mixture and bake in preheated 350 F. oven about 15 minutes.

To prepare stuffed mushrooms, remove stems from one pound of large mushrooms, chop fine. Mix stems, a cup of soft bread crumbs, one tablespoon each finely chopped onion and parsley, two tablespoons melted butter, salt and pepper. Place in buttered shallow casserole and bake.

The Holiday Fruit Bread is made with prepared package hot roll mix as directed but use three eggs and add a fourth cup each of sugar, butter and chopped candied fruit. Bake in greased coffee can, collared with aluminum foil for tall bread.

Always have plenty of good hot coffee.

As for other drinks, Smirnoff suggests:

Dine at noon: On Resolution Day

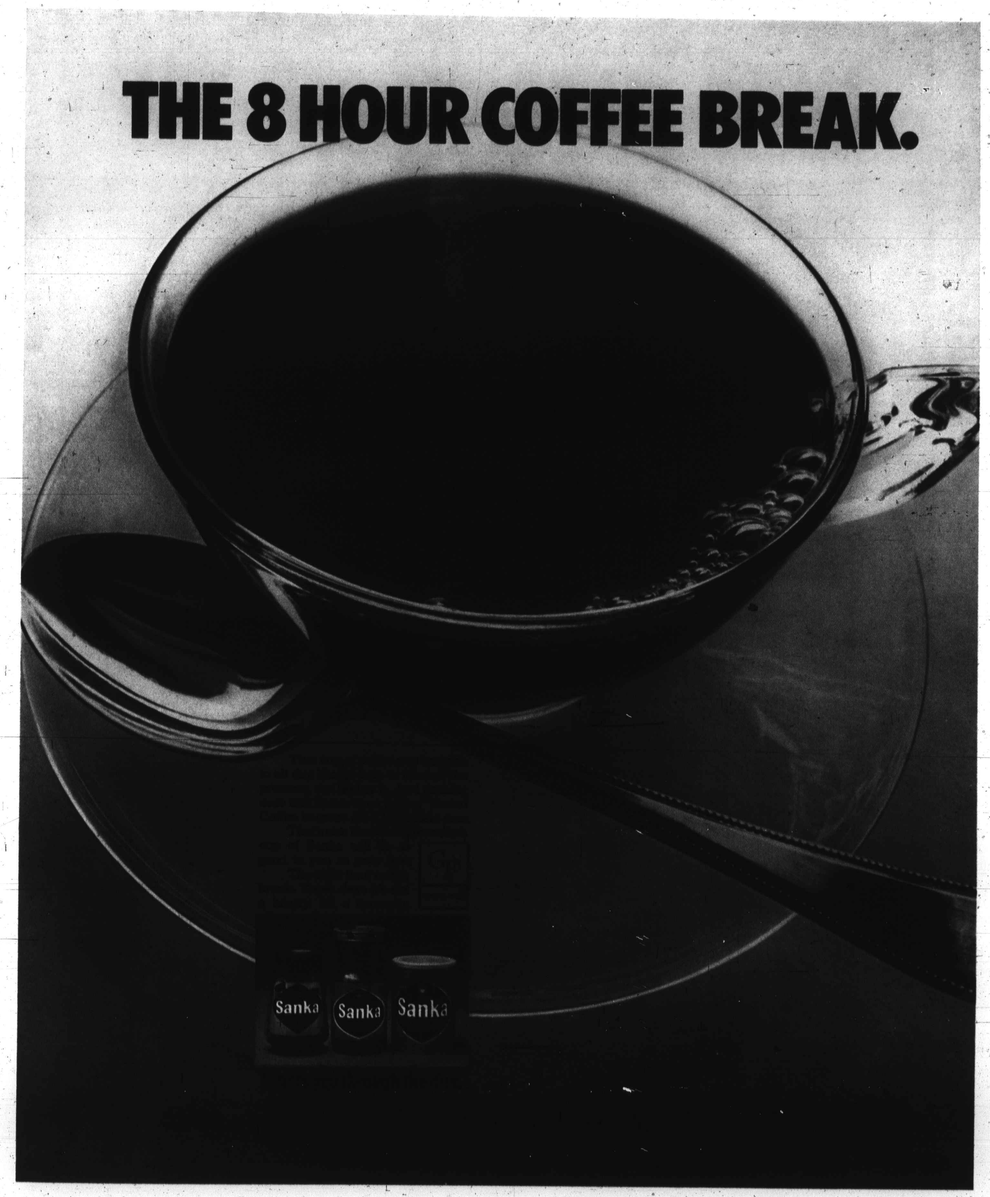
Start the New Year with a Brunch so bright you're guaranteed many happy return invitations.

Waffles Russe

Prepare waffle batter with pancake mix as directed on package. Drop batter by tablespoons on greased, heated waffle iron for small round waffles. Top with sour cream and caviar.

Broiled Lamb Chops

Order Frenched double lamb chops and broil medium rare. Serve with mint jelly.

Baked Barley

Heat ½ cup butter in an ovenproof casserole that has a cover. Add 1 chopped onion and brown lightly. Add 2 cups barley and cook, stirring until barley is golden. Add 4 cups chicken bouillon, salt and pepper. Bring liquid to a boil, cover and bake in preheated 325° F. oven about half hour or until barley is tender. Makes 8 servings.