hosting guide

iftar for gaza

unrwa

usa national committee
By hosting, you will raise awareness around food insecurity in the Gaza Strip while helping Palestine refugee families put food on the table.

**First, here's a bit of background on UNRWA's food assistance program and the conditions Palestine refugees are living under in the Gaza Strip.**

The Gaza Strip has been under an illegal blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt for eleven years, causing staggering levels of unemployment and poverty. Consequently, nearly one million of the 1.3 million Palestine refugees in Gaza rely on UNRWA food assistance to meet their basic daily needs.

Food assistance packages come four times a year to families living under the poverty line. For $150, you can provide one food assistance package containing enough flour, rice, whole milk, oil, chickpeas, lentils and protein-rich sardines to feed a family for the summer.

The deep funding cuts made by the US government in January 2018 directly impact UNRWA's ability to continue essential programming, including emergency food assistance. By hosting an Iftar for Gaza, you help provide a lifeline to Palestine refugees in the Gaza Strip and send them the powerful message that Americans care.

**Do I need to be Muslim to host an iftar?**

Absolutely not! If providing food assistance to Palestine refugee families is important to you, you are a perfect candidate to host an Iftar for Gaza.

Just as you do not have to be Christian to attend a Christmas or Easter celebration or Jewish to participate in a Passover seder, you do not have to be Muslim to host an Iftar for Gaza.

If you already have plans to host an iftar this Ramadan, this is a perfect opportunity for you to make it a charitable affair.
step 1

Click “Host an Iftar” to create the fundraising page for your event

Next, set a fundraising goal. $150 can feed a Palestine refugee family for the summer, so set a goal that is divisible by 150. Now, when you talk to your guests, you can be clear about the impact. The more money you raise, the more families you provide food assistance to!

Personalize your fundraising page with a photo and a description to let people know why this cause is important to you.

Once you set up your page, you’ll be emailed your page link -- include it in all communications with your friends and guests.

And remember, we’re always here to help! Once you sign up to host, Isra Chaker from the UNRWA USA team will be in touch to answer any questions and set you up for success!

step 2

Donate $30 or more to receive an official Iftar for Gaza hosting kit by mail

Before asking others to support your event, show your personal commitment by making your own donation.

If you donate $30+ to your page, we’ll mail you an Iftar for Gaza hosting kit which includes:

- Ten (10) seating name cards which could also be used to label buffet-style dishes
- Ten (10) menus to preview the meal
- Three (3) informational table displays to inform your guests about conditions in the Gaza Strip and UNRWA food assistance
- One (1) decorative “Iftar for Gaza” banner for festive photo-ops
- Eight (8) conversation cards to spark dialogue on thought-provoking topics
- One (1) “We fed” sign to fill out at the end of the night to remind everyone of the impact in Gaza
- UNRWA USA donation envelopes to make the giving easy
Plan the details of your event

Start with the date/time. In 2018, Ramadan begins mid-May and ends mid-June.

If you’re planning to host a traditional iftar at sunset, this tool can help you determine what time sundown is on the day of your dinner. Plan for guests to arrive around 30 minutes before sundown.

Be creative with your theme! You can host Taco Tuesday at the park, have a virtual iftar where everyone orders take out and meets over Skype/Houseparty, make reservations at your favorite local restaurant, host a BBQ potluck, or invite people for pizza at your home. As a reminder, take into consideration dietary restrictions, allergies, and any religious needs.

See photos from past participants who all interpreted their Iftar for Gaza in creative and different ways!

Invite your guests and start fundraising

Download the invitation graphic and upload it to Paperless Post using this template. You’ll need to create an account if you don’t have one.

Remove the optional liner and envelope to keep the invite free to send. Use the tools to add in a line about your event, the date, time, location, and any other relevant information.

On the “enter details” page in Paperless Post, there is a section called “event page settings.” Click the blue button at the bottom that says “Additional options” and select “Include additional information for your guests.” This is where you should add your fundraising page link!

Share your fundraising page link widely and ask friends/family across the country to join your effort to provide UNRWA food assistance for Palestine refugees. Who knows who will say yes! If someone can’t attend, you still want to give them the opportunity to donate.

Get creative with your fundraising incentives! Offer to match donations up to a set amount or give $1-3 for every donation made to your page. For the donor who makes the largest contribution, reward them with their favorite dessert. Double your impact by checking with your employer about matching gift options.
step 5

Host your Iftar for Gaza

On the big day, decorate with the Iftar for Gaza materials you received by mail (if you donated $30+). During your event, take time to share with your guests why you support UNRWA USA and why food assistance is so urgently needed in the Gaza Strip (refer to your table displays for some facts).

To create dialogue around access to sufficient food and challenges facing refugees in the US, the Gaza Strip, and beyond, encourage your friends and family to use the included conversation cards.

Before dinner is over, make a pitch for donations, especially if you haven’t reached your fundraising goal. Remember, people don’t donate if you don’t ask! So have a computer or tablet on-site with your fundraising page loaded so guests can donate on the spot. You can also text your link to your guests during your iftar or in a thank you message following the event.

You can collect checks, cash, or credit card donations and send them in to UNRWA USA using the envelopes provided in your hosting kit. Please make sure every donor fills out their own envelope so UNRWA USA can provide a tax receipt and proper acknowledgment.
We want people across the United States to join together to support this cause and prove to Palestine refugees in Gaza that Americans care -- sharing your success online is critical to that.

Be part of a nationwide conversation by using #IftarForGaza on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Share photos of your event, your Spotify playlist, and the most interesting answers to the questions on the conversation cards. If your guests use the hashtag too, you’ll end up with a curated collection of memories from the night while also spreading awareness about the cause!

**Remember the photo-op!** Fill in the blank on your “We Fed” sign and take different photos with it. To determine the correct number of families fed, divide the total amount raised by 150. **Pro tip:** have someone with good handwriting write your number as bold and as large as possible using a dark colored marker and have those holding the sign pose close to the camera to get a clear shot!

In addition to UNRWA USA liking and sharing any of your public photos, Isra will follow up with you after your event to discuss your success and collect any additional photos from the evening.
thank you for showing palestine refugees that americans care