



How-to Guide for Hosting a SAPIR Salon

A **SAPIR Salon** is an intimate gathering of people who come together for meaningful and thought-provoking conversations around the essays, ideas, and provocations featured in SAPIR. Interested in hosting one? It's easy! Here are some suggested guidelines:

1) **Guests**

Make sure to have between three and 10 guests. Prioritize different perspectives, active participants, curious individuals, good friends! Your guests should feel empowered to share their thoughts and encouraged to listen to others.

Determine, in advance, which essay(s) you would like to discuss and make sure your guests do the reading prior to attending the SAPIR Salon.

2) **Venue**

Host it anywhere that lends itself to a rich discussion. Ideally, it's in a living room – yours, or someone who generously offers to open their home – because it provides a level of privacy and comfort that allows your guests to be as open as possible.

3) **Environment**

As host, make sure to create an environment conducive to the goal of the salon: keep it welcoming and inviting. In your invitations, be clear that this salon is meant to be an exchange of ideas across the spectrum, not a singular echo chamber of beliefs. Spirited disagreement is okay as long as it remains civil and never devolves into insults.

On the day of the event, make sure to provide comfortable seating in a circle or loose clusters, delicious food and/or drinks, and copies of the essay for anyone who might need.

4) **Facilitation**

You get first bite at the apple. If you prefer to steer the discussion, great. If not, invite someone from your network to lead the conversation. Facilitating the discussion means preparing and posing thought-provoking questions related to the SAPIR essay (use ours, if you wish!) and making sure that everyone in the room has a chance to speak.

5) **Suggested Flow**

- **Arrivals:** Mingling, snacks, music – whatever makes people feel welcome.
- **Opening:** The host welcomes guests, shares intentions of the salon, highlights the “spirit” of the discussion (curiosity, generosity, thoughtfulness), and delves into the overall topic.
- **Conversation:** The facilitator can recap the main points of the article and begin with an opening question (one reliable option is always “What did you agree or disagree with from the essay, and why?”). Let the discussion evolve naturally. Accept the unexpected, allow the conversation to wander, and if it comes to a natural pause, feel free to introduce the next question you prepared. As host and/or facilitator, lightly steer if needed — invite quieter voices, gently refocus if it drifts too much.
- **Closing:** Invite your guests to share a thought they're taking away from the conversation – and, if inspired, maybe an action item as well! Thank everyone for joining and participating – and encourage them to attend the next SAPIR Salon (and sign up for free copies of the journal in the mail!)

Follow-up: We'd love to hear from you! After you've closed the doors on the last guest, reach out to us at the email below and tell us who you are. Share a picture, idea, or stand-out quote from the conversation.

Have questions? Feel free to reach out to salons@sapirjournal.org.