

# Tips For Planning An End of Summer Soiree

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Summer is practically over and as we head into the final weeks of July, it's time to start planning an end-of-summer soiree. Kim Rivera from Toast AZ Events told us some quick tips to make it easy to celebrate the end of summer and help bring in the fall.

## How can we plan a summer soiree on a budget?

**KR:** Plan a theme that could include things you already have at home. I suggest a mix and match theme that includes mixing and matching plates and napkins. This can also accommodate a large number of guests.

## What type of food is fitting for a summer soiree?

**KR:** When planning what food to serve, if sticking to a strict budget, plan a menu of mostly small appetizers or tapas-style foods. Try items like caprese salad skewers, meatballs, and bread and cheese boards; choose foods that are filling but not expensive.

## What are fun summer themes?

**KR:** I like to theme summer-end parties based on vacations that I have taken that summer. It extends the experience and lets you share your vacation with friends and family. If you have been on a beach vacation—have a party with shades of the ocean, candles and foods you loved on your vacation. I love giving my guests something as a take away from my parties. It can be as simple as drawstring burlap gift bag with seashells you collected from the beach. If you have been to Mexico, have a fiesta with mariachis and bright color décor. The creativity is limitless!

## How should invites be sent out?

**KR:** I am all about physical invitations—either hand-delivered or mailed. They make your invited guests feel special, especially with the endless number of emails we get a day—it's nice to receive something you can touch and feel! You can always follow up with an email for final counts.

## What time of day should the party be planned?

**KR:** Since we live in the desert and it is usually still pretty warm until October, I would opt for early evening. For an adult-only party—plan it for September when the kids are back in school and the parents could use a well-deserved break!

## Where should the party be hosted?

**KR:** I really like to host (when at all possible) parties at my own home. It's personal and comfortable and it really allows your unique personality to show through.

## What beverages are perfect for summer parties?

**KR:** I like to keep it simple...Wine, beer, plenty of water and choose one signature cocktail that fits your theme. Pink Palomas for a summer soiree would be perfect—tequila and pink grapefruit soda garnished with fresh grapefruit—amazing! Homemade sangria is always refreshing and pretty as well! I like offering the signature cocktail to guests as they arrive as a welcome to the party and to make them comfortable.

Most importantly enjoy your party, and don't stress as the host.