

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.