

SOIRTAY

SOIR•TAY \swar-tay\ *n.* | A gathering in the home, distinct in its elements of edgy elegance and with a hostess who breaks the Martha Crocker mold. *v.* **2** To host a social gathering in the home with the sass and science as illustrated herein.

Each SOIRTAY is organized into three buckets of understanding to make preparation accessible and fun.



SET THE TONE

The how-to for all decorative and sensory details



SET THE TABLE

The how-to for all edible elements



SET YOURSELF

The how-to for staying stylish and present

We're on a mission to resuscitate the art of the dinner party – to give you everything you need: DIY tutorials for snazzy décor components that really elevate the tone for your guests; deliciously creative menus that deliver healthy and seasonal edibles to the table and keep you out of the kitchen (as much as possible); and lastly our sassy and centered reminders on how to prepare yourself as the hostess who has the most fun in the best shoes.

A perfect soirtay is like a wind-up toy. You do what you can to set everything up and then you let it run wild and become its very own living, laughing, waddling thing.

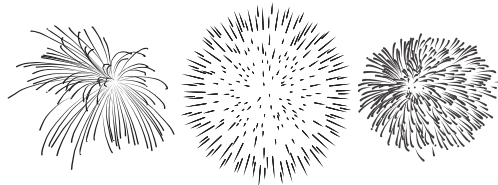
the FOURTH

Today ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more.

- JOHN ADAMS, *JULY 2, 1776*

Parades and lemonade. Backyard barbecues and fireworks displays. Fingers sticky from watermelon drippings and popsicle licking. Everyone outside together long past the fireflies retire. That's what we remember. That's what we loved. That's what we referenced when putting together a dinner party that leaves nothing to be desired, despite the normal considerations of city livin'. In this soirtay we'll show you everything you need to outlast the fireflies and create your own fireworks.

If John Adams says to illuminate – who are we to disagree?! Today is about sharing the celebration of our good fortune and freedom. Tonight's party will be a blast.



SET THE TONE



SET THE TABLE



SET YOURSELF



SET THE TONE

edgy DIY

You don't need a caterer or a party planner to create an event that is unforgettable. You just need a little creativity and a mindset that appreciates the hundreds of different ways that a Solo cup can be transformed and cupcake foils can be twisted or balloons can be suspended. If you want a moment to feel special, you need to set that special tone.

Soirtay is full of DIY, but it's never DIY for the heck of it; it's DIY-FAR: Do It Yourself-*For a Reason*. For Soirtay, the reason we cut and glue and hang and light is to transform an everyday space into a place where a special moment will be shared. Every element has a context and a role in a Soirtay story that elevates the ordinary, with a high-heeled hostess right at its heart.

You can take the DIY as far as it tickles you. Our role is to give you the instructions, the tools and materials so you never break the bank or your back. You host. We toast. Cheers.

BOOM! POW! WOW!



SET THE TONE

Set the tone for this Fourth soirtay with an invitation that literally pops off the page. Blending the reference to Roy Lichtenstein's Pop Art as well as the nostalgic Super Bubble gum we once gathered from the curb of the holiday parade, your friends and family are sure to digest the festive tone as soon as they open their envelopes.



MATERIALS

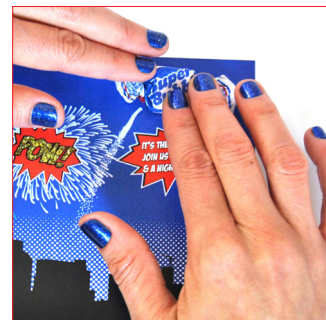
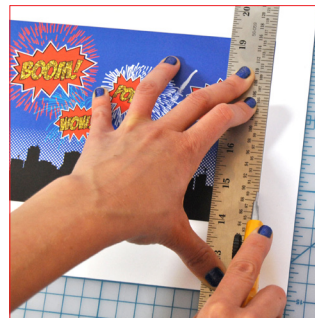
Ultra Fine White Paint Sharpie
 Super Bubble Gum (1 per invite)
 Glue Dots
 Olfa Blade & Cutting Mat
 Metal Ruler
 8"X11" White Cardstock
 A9 Envelopes (Red)

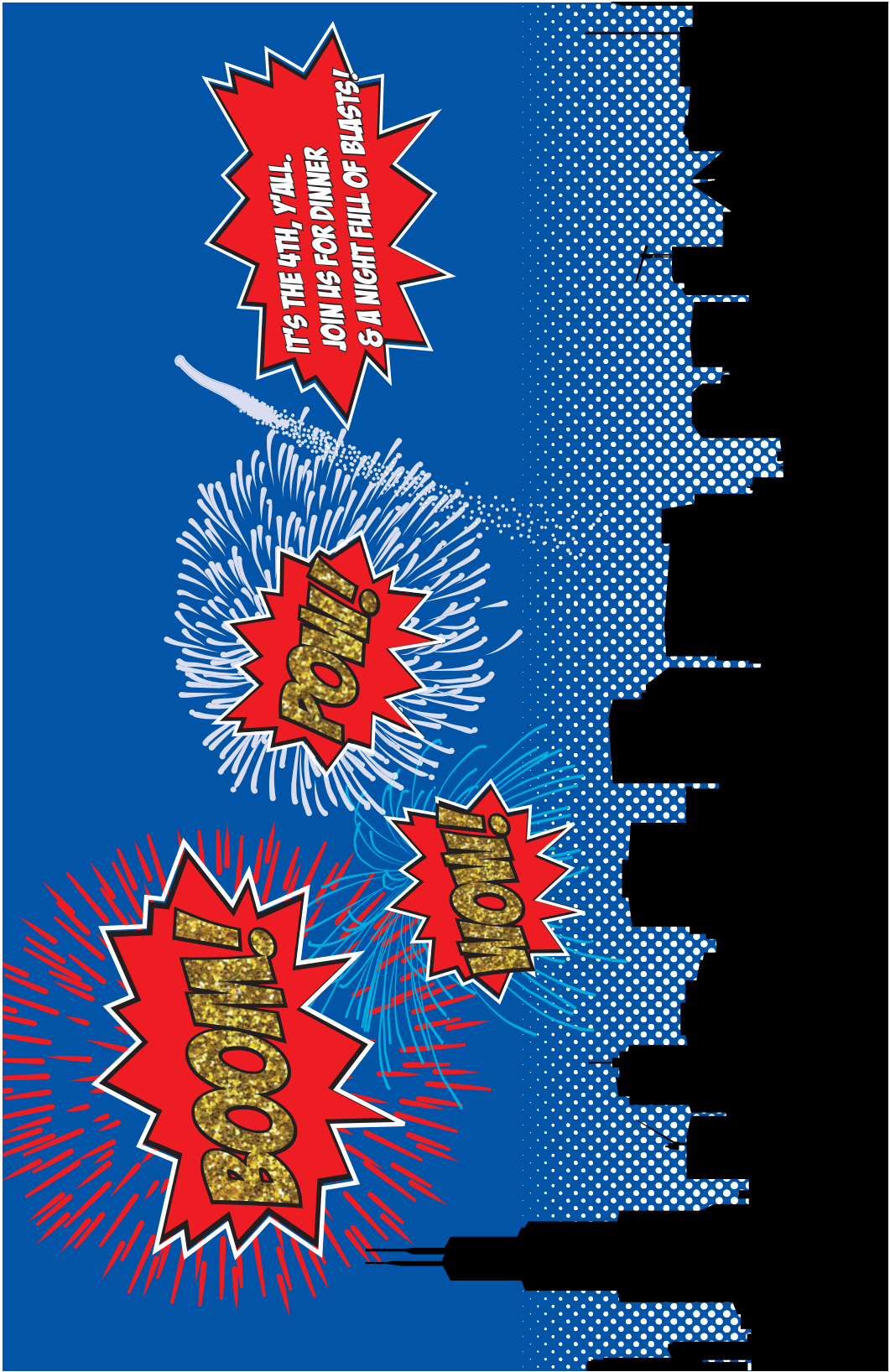


+/-
\$13

HOW TO

- 1 Print **Boom! Pow! Wow! Invite** on cardstock. It is formatted to 5.5 x 8.5 which fits envelope size A9. Cut template along guidelines with olfa blade and cutting mat. Don't let the scissors tempt you.
- 2 Using your white sharpie, write the event details into the black cityscape (Date, Address, Time). You may want to practice once first.
- 3 Flatten Super Bubble piece of gum for mailing.
- 4 Attach one glue dot to the flattened gum and secure to invitation at the end of the white streak.
- 5 Address envelopes, then stuff, seal and mail.





ENTRY PIECE

TWIST BALLOON FIREWORK



SET THE TONE

From the street or your apartment hallway, this easy piece screams *WELCOME TO THE PARTY* as loudly as the fireworks it's meant to emulate.



MATERIALS

15 – 20 Red, White and Blue
Twist Balloons
Balloon Pump
3 Extra Small Safety Pins
8"X11" White Cardstock
Scissors
White Kitchen Twine
Masking Tape



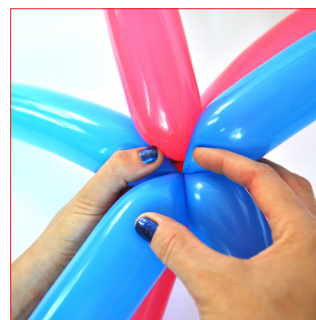
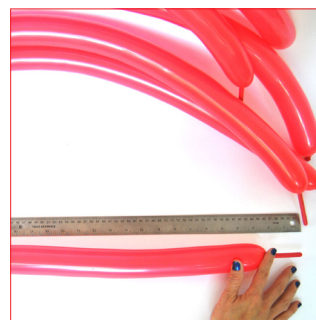
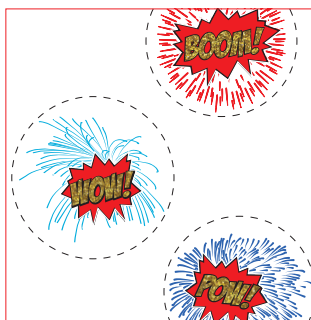
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\$10



HOW TO

Note: On the page, this appears way more complicated than it actually is. Check out www.soirtay.com for an easy peasy how-to video.

- 1 Print **Boom! Pow! Wow! Circles** on cardstock. Cut along dotted line. Set aside.
- 2 Inflate all the balloons to approximately a yard's length, leaving a tip of approximately 2 inches. Knot shut.
- 3 Pair 2 red balloons and twist them together 1/3 up the balloon from the tied end.
- 4 Pair 2 blue balloons and twist them together from the tied end. Attach the blue pair to the red pair by twisting at the point between the segments.
- 5 Pair 2 white balloons and add to bundle.
- 6 Attach one additional balloon of each color to the bundle by twisting it on at the same 1/3 point.



ENTRY PIECE

TWIST BALLOON FIREWORK

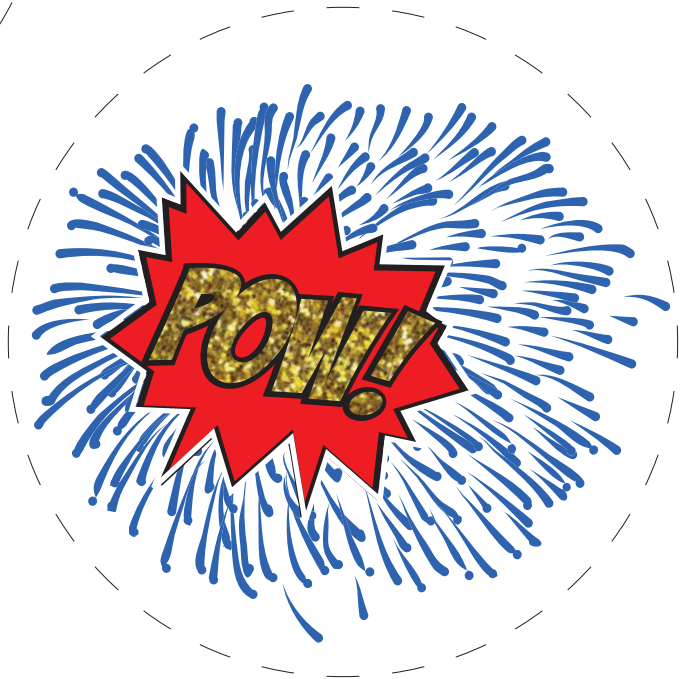
HOW TO (continued)

7 Attach the remaining balloons in the same method, except the twisting point will be near the tip end, approximately 1/5 the way up from the un-inflated "tail." (This variation will give the right scale and volume.)

8 Knot kitchen twine to the tied end of one balloon, hang over door and secure with masking tape on the interior side.

9 Hole punch Boom! Pow! Wow! circles and attach to three separate balloons at the knotted ends towards the center of the firework





FREE TO EAT! FLAGS



SET THE TONE

You are free to eat! The message is clear. But what you don't see are the Independence Day trivia questions on the back. It's a fun (and edifying) entrée into conversation before the entrée is served. Don't forget to print the answers or put them into your smartphone.



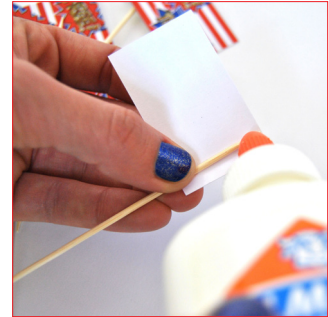
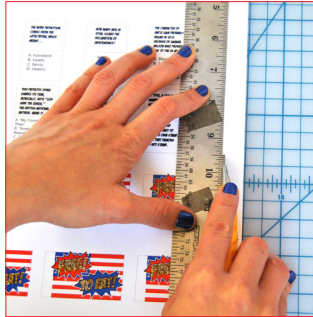
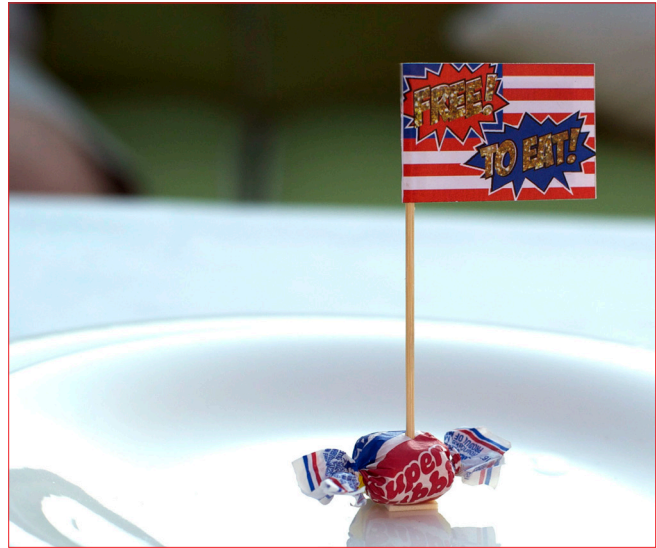
MATERIALS

Super Bubble Gum (1 per guest)
Toothpicks
8"X11" White Cardstock
Scissors **or** Olfa Blade & Cutting Mat & Metal Ruler
Glue



HOW TO

- 1 Print **Free to Eat! Flags** on cardstock. Cut out flags and trivia questions.
- 2 Lightly score left side of flag, bend, and glue to toothpick
- 3 Fold trivia questions and glue to back of flag.
- 4 Stick toothpick in Super Bubble.



THE WORD PATRIOTISM COMES FROM THE LATIN PATRIA, WHICH MEANS ...

- A. homeland
- B. loyalty
- C. family
- D. treason

HOW MANY MEN IN TOTAL SIGNED THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE?

- A. 56
- B. 66
- C. 77
- D. 87

THE CHARACTER OF UNCLE SAM PROBABLY BEGAN IN 1812 BECAUSE OF SAMUEL WILSON WHO PROVIDED THIS TO THE US ARMY.

- A. Blankets
- B. Meat
- C. Letters of Correspondence
- D. Ammunition

THIS PATRIOTIC HYMN SHARES ITS TUNE, IRONICALLY, WITH "GOD SAVE THE QUEEN," THE BRITISH NATIONAL ANTHEM. NAME IT.

- A. "My Country, 'Tis of Thee"
- B. "America the Beautiful"
- C. "The Marines Hymn"
- D. "God Bless America"

WHICH ONE OF THESE PRESIDENTS HAD SOMEONE OTHER THAN HIS WIFE SERVE AS FIRST LADY?

- A. James Madison
- B. Andrew Jackson
- C. Theodore Roosevelt
- D. John Quincy Adams

IN 1915, A GUY NAMED HANDWERKER DELIVERED HOT DOGS. EATING ONLY FREE HOTDOGS AND SLEEPING ON THE KITCHEN

FLOOR, HE SAVED ENOUGH MONEY TO START HIS OWN STAND. NAME THAT FAMOUS RED HOT STAND.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE CONTAINS THE WORDS, "UNDER GOD..." UNDER WHICH PRES. WAS THIS AMENDMENT PASSED?

- A. Taft
- B. Kennedy
- C. Lincoln
- D. Eisenhower

ACCORDING TO GEORGE WASHINGTON THE FLAG'S STARS SYMBOLIZED SKY, THE RED OUR BRITISH HERITAGE AND THE WHITE MEANT...

- A. Secession
- B. Purity
- C. Honesty
- D. Piety

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY WROTE THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER. WHAT WAS HIS PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATION?

- A. Dentist
- B. Lawyer
- C. Doctor
- D. Ship Captain

TRUE OR FALSE: DISPLAYING A FLAG HORIZONTALLY, LIKE BEFORE A FOOTBALL

GAME IS A VIOLATION OF THE FLAG CODE?



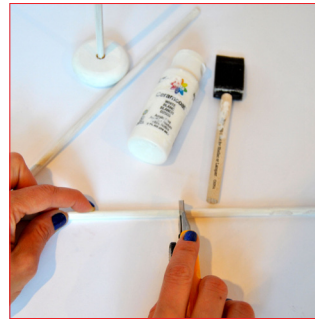
CENTERPIECE

MOD FIREWORK ART



SET THE TONE

Drawing inspiration from both of these pieces (from Design Within Reach and Dwell Studio, respectively), this centerpiece brings a 60-esque mod to your dinner table and continues the tone set by the Lichtenstein-alluding Pop Art invites.



MATERIALS

- 1 1-in Styrofoam Ball
- 30 3- $\frac{3}{4}$ " Toothpicks
- 30 6mm Sparkly Beads in Red, Gold or Blue
- Gold, Red and Blue Spray Paint
- $\frac{1}{4}$ " Dowel Rod (vary lengths from 8-11")
- White Paint
- Elmer's Glue
- 1 Olfa Blade (see picture 1)
- Tissue Paper in Red, Gold & Blue
- 1 Toy Wheel



HOW TO

Note: Directions are per firework.

- 1 Cut dowels to varying lengths between 8 - 11" using an Olfa Blade. Paint dowels and toy wheel bases white. Once dry, insert dowel into base.
- 2 Spray paint 30 toothpicks gold, red, or blue. Toothpicks are light so spray from afar against a piece of cardboard. To cut down on mess, wear a latex glove and roll toothpicks in extra spray paint to get an even coat. Let dry in singular layer.



MOD FIREWORK ART

HOW TO (continued)

3 Insert dowel 1/4" into foam ball to pre-form the attachment hole.

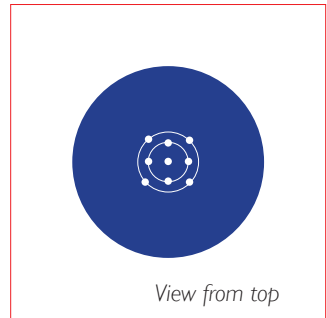
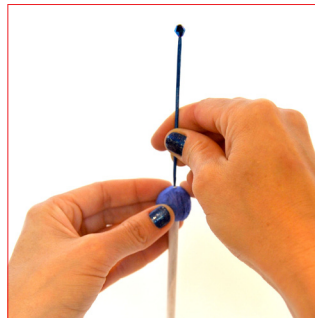
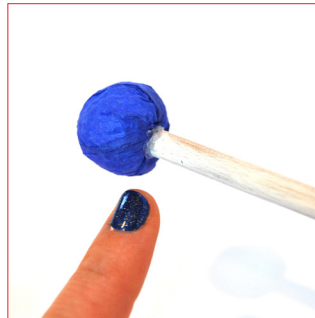
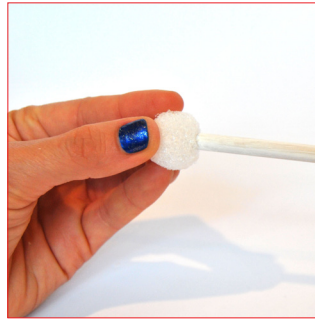
4 Cut a 4" square of tissue paper. Wrap around ball and cut at base.

5 Put a dab of Elmer's glue at end of dowel and insert into pre-holed tissue-covered foam ball.

6 Roll toothpick point in hot glue and attach sparkly bead.

7 Dab non-sparkly toothpick end in glue and insert into foam ball at top.

8 Build first two "circles" per diagram. Continue inserting toothpicks as you rotate foam ball looking for openings. Alternate so that no two toothpicks are directly in line. *Note: On the page, this appears way more complicated than it actually is. Check out www.soirtay.com for an easy peasy how-to video.*



DO-A-OOMPH

H2OMELON SPARKLER-WORKS



SET THE TONE

Watermelons and sparklers—nothing is more Fourth of July. This project combines the two and becomes a small scale fireworks event for your guests. You can even make it a competition to inspire pairs to put on their design hats. This is truly a doable-oomph that will sparkle in memories for years to come. That's why we call it *do-a-oomph!*

Oh and don't worry about setting the neighborhood on fire; the WATERmelons serve double purpose as the structural base and safety measure. If you're still fretting, keep a watering can on hand just in case.



MATERIALS

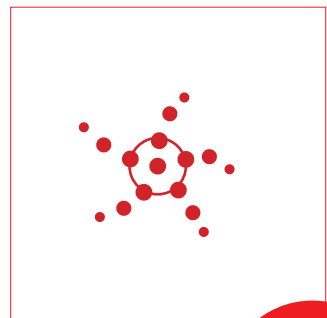
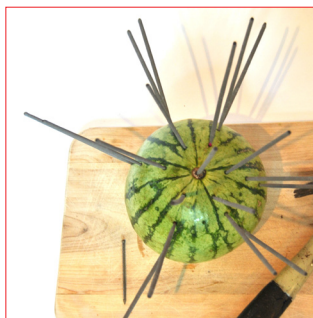
- 3 Packages of Gold Sparklers (Qty. 8 sparklers per pkg)
- 1 Mini Watermelon
- Hammer
- 1 Large Nail
- 2 Utility Lighters



HOW TO

Note: This is per watermelon sparkler-work.

- 1 Slice bottom of watermelon so that it stands on its own.
- 2 Scoop out and reserve watermelon insides for watermelon vinaigrette and watermelon sparkler drinks. [See Menu]
- 3 Dry inside of watermelon with paper towel.
- 4 Use hammer and nail to design "firework" pattern on watermelon.
- 5/6 Insert sparklers into holes in any pattern.
- 7 Light outside to bring your watermelon firework to life! We found it easier to have two people light from opposite sides as the sparklers light quickly.





the MENU

Food is a crucial element of every event (especially a dinner party), but you don't want to miss the party because you're stuck in the kitchen fussing. Delicious, seasonal, healthy food that is low on stress and preparation: that's our menu-guiding philosophy.

For this holiday we typically think barbecue, but manning the grill still takes you away from the table and your crew. Instead we suggest you build the menu with various salads and make the appetizer and dessert as easy or *pre-prepared* as possible. Sometimes this means going with a store-bought option. Yes: the store bought option. Don't worry. It's all explained here.

COCKTAIL

Watermelon Sparkler

APPETIZER

Beet hummus
with White & Blue Potato Chips

MAIN DISHES

Dill Chicken Salad on Parker House Rolls
Caprese Firework Pasta Salad
Arugula Salad with Watermelon Vinaigrette

DESSERT

Patriotic Panna Cotta



5 UP TO DAYS IN ADVANCE

- Core watermelons and reserve fruit as-is in gallon bag and freeze

1 DAY IN ADVANCE

- Roast beet and mix into hummus
- Boil blue pasta
- Make chicken salad
- Take reserved watermelon out of freezer
- Make panna cotta
- Make watermelon vinaigrette

0 THE DAY OF

- Slice tomatoes & basil for caprese salad; assemble
- Build chicken salad sandwiches
- Slice red onion, dice cucumber, and assemble arugula salad with feta and toss with dressing

COCKTAIL

WATERMELON SPARKLER

In our minds, watermelon is a summer essential and a perfect ingredient for this independence ade—especially if you're already coring the fruit for your do-a-oomph component. If you do core the watermelons early, reserve the fruit in a freezer bag and freeze until you're ready to puree.

- 1 baby seedless watermelon
 - 24 oz. sparkling berry flavored seltzer*
 - 1 bottle of sparkling wine
 - 1 lime (for garnish)
- * Look for pink-hued option to intensify watermelon color.*

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- 1 Slice off the top of the watermelon.
 - 2 Using a metal spoon, scoop all the fruit from the inside of the melon and transfer it into your blender.
 - 3 Puree, cover and refrigerate.*
 - 4 Combine watermelon puree and seltzer into pitcher.
 - 5 Create cocktail by pouring 2 parts watermelon mixture to 1 part sparkling wine.
 - 6 Garnish with a lime wedge.

**If you do not like pulp, consider straining the juice with a strainer after pureeing.*



NOTES



APPETIZER

BEET HUMMUS WITH TERRA STRIPES & BLUE CHIPS

Here's a store bought moment with a twist. Hummus fiends that we are, we have done it homemade countless times and still agree that Trader Joe's version is best. The addition of roasted beet still gives you the chance to creatively dress it up. We couldn't help going with blue and red chips here but in retrospect, using plain kettle chips would better showcase the beautiful beet-hued hummus.

1 bag of Terra vegetable chips:
Stripes & Blue
1 16 oz. hummus
1 large beet
Aluminium foil

- 1 Preheat oven to 450.
- 2 Clean beet and slice off the top and tail.
- 3 Wrap beet in aluminum foil and roast for 50 minutes until tender when pierced with a fork.
- 4 Unwrap foil. Place beet in bowl where it will sweat out its juice as it rests.
- 5 Reserve this juice and pour into the hummus. Stir until you achieve a lovely deep red color.
- 6 Serve with Terra vegetable chips, or plain kettle chips.

NOTES



MAIN

DILL CHICKEN SALAD ON PARKER HOUSE ROLLS

Using a rotisserie chicken from the market cuts your prep time by more than half and adds flavors that are tricky to achieve in the kitchen. Make the salad the night before and refrigerate so flavors have time to meld. You'll want to nuzzle these salad portions into smaller buns. We chose Parker House rolls, not just because they were first made in the Cradle of Liberty, but because they are softer than the comparative Kaiser kin. Consider slicing out the middle so they are less doughy.

- 1 rotisserie chicken
- 3/4 cup greek yogurt
- 3/4 cup light mayo
- 2 green onions – minced
- 3 large celery stalks – diced
- 3 TBS fresh dill – chopped
- 2 TBS capers
- 1 TBS ground or dijon mustard
- Salt & Pepper
- Parker House rolls

- 1 Skin and separate the chicken, using two forks. You want to retain some of the chicken's texture, so do not shred the meat too finely.
- 2 Mince, dice and chop the additional ingredients.
- 3 Mix everything together. Cover and refrigerate. (Never forget to taste!)
- 4 Once ready to serve, scoop generous portions onto individual parker rolls and stack neatly onto a serving platter.

NOTES



CAPRESE FIREWORK PASTA SALAD

You can boil the pasta the night before and still achieve a perfect consistency. In fact, we've found this works best. Rock on! Since the homemade watermelon vinaigrette tops the arugula salad, we decided to make life easy and use a store bought dressing here. Because caprese salad is traditionally served with balsamic vinegar and olive oil, we chose our favorite store-bought brand: Brianna's The New American Creamy Balsamic Vinaigrette. (Fitting name, right?)

1 lb. regular pasta shells
2 pints of grape or cherry tomatoes
1/2 cup chopped fresh basil
2 pints (8 oz container) mini mozzarella balls

For dressing:
Brianna's The New American Creamy Balsamic Vinaigrette

- 1 Boil pot of water. Add shells, 1 TBS of salt and 20-25 drops of blue food dye, stirring often, until al dente. If preparing beforehand, store in fridge in gallon bag with 1 TBS of olive oil.
- 2 Slice tomatoes lengthwise and chop basil into thin strips. Add to pasta. Don't over do it with the herb as too much can add a bitter taste.
- 3 Drain mozzarella balls and add 1-1/2 cups to pasta.
- 4 Lightly coat pasta salad with balsamic vinaigrette dressing. Taste and add salt and pepper as needed.
**Dress right before serving to avoid noodle bloating.*



NOTES



MAIN

ARUGULA SALAD WITH WATERMELON VINAIGRETTE

Yes, watermelon vinaigrette. It's awesomely subtle for the summery greens and you can't buy it anywhere. This is the time for homemade!

- 1 bag of organic arugula
- 1 seedless cucumber – diced
- 1 small red onion – sliced
- 6 - 8 oz. feta cheese – crumbled

For Dressing:

- 1/2 cup watermelon puree
- 1/2 lemon – juiced
- 2 TBS red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/2 tsp Salt
- 1/2 tsp Pepper

- 1 Mix together all the dressing ingredients except olive oil.
- 2 Slowly whisk in olive oil until emulsified.
- 3 Refrigerate until you are ready to serve the salad. (Preferably overnight.)
- 4 Shortly before serving dinner combine the greens, cucumber, onion and cheese in a large salad bowl. Mix with dressing amount according to preference. (Most likely you will have extra dressing.)



NOTES



PATRIOTIC PANNA COTTA

Panna cotta is a traditional, easy and delicious Italian custard. Adding a few steps with strawberries and blueberries dresses it up for this American celebration. The trickiest part of the whole recipe is finding the gelatin. Hint: The brand is Knox; the box is orange and white, and usually stocked just below Bill Cosby's Jell-O.

4 oz. chocolate cookie (We like Trader Joe's Mini Chocolate Hazelnut Biscotti)
1 pint fresh blueberries
1 cup fresh organic strawberries – de-stemmed
1/3 cup skim milk
1 (0.25 ounce) envelope unflavored gelatin
2-1/2 cups heavy cream
1/2 cup white sugar
1-1/2 tsp vanilla extract



1 In a food processor combine and blend 8 oz. blueberries with 4 oz. of cookie.

2 Evenly distribute this crust into 6 – 8 small glasses. Top this layer with 4 – 5 additional blueberries per serving. Freeze for 1 – 3 hours. (Or refrigerate overnight.)

3 Pour milk into a small bowl and stir in the gelatin powder. Set aside.

4 In a saucepan, stir together the heavy cream and sugar and set over medium heat. Bring to a full boil, watching carefully, as the cream will quickly rise to the top of the pan. Pour the gelatin and milk into the cream, stirring until

completely dissolved. Cook for one minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, stir in the vanilla. Let the cream cool for 10 minutes.

5 Remove the set crusts from the freezer (or refrigerator) and pour the warm cream evenly into each glass. Let it cool to room temperature, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 4 hours until serving.

6 Use food processor to chop the fresh strawberries. Just before serving, top each panna cotta with one dollop of strawberries and additional blueberries.

NOTES



your GROCERY LIST

PRODUCE

2 pints cherry or grape tomatoes
1 large beet
1 bag of organic arugula
1 seedless cucumber
1 small red onion
1 bunch green onions
3 large celery stalks
1 lime
1 lemon
1 package fresh basil
1 package fresh dill
1 pint blueberries
1 pint strawberries
1 baby seedless watermelon

BREAD

1 lb pasta shells
1 bag of Terra vegetable chips:
Stripes & Blue OR 1 bag of plain
kettle chips
2 packages of Parker House rolls

DAIRY

2 pints (8 oz container) mini
mozzarella balls
6 8 oz. feta
1/3 c. skim milk
1 quart heavy cream
1 individual serving Greek yogurt
3/4 c. light or regular mayo

MISCELLANEOUS

1 16 oz. hummus

1 rotisserie chicken
2 TBS capers

4 oz. chocolate cookie
Knox unflavored gelatin

DRINKS

24 oz. sparkling berry flavored
seltzer (pink-hued)
1 bottle sparkling wine

TO CHECK IF YOU HAVE

2 TBS red wine vinegar
1/2 c. white sugar
1-1/2 tsp vanilla extract
1/4 c. olive oil
1 TBS ground or dijon mustard



staying **PRESENT**

Legend has it that fireworks were invented in a Chinese kitchen when the cook accidentally spilled *saltpepper* into the flame of a cooking fire. Lo and behold, *saltpepper*—a popular cooking spice about 2000 years ago—happens to be one of the key agents in gunpowder. And then along came a monk who wondered what might happen if he encased this earliest form of gunpowder within bamboo et voila: boom, pow, wow! Or as they said in the Chinese days of yore: Bian Pao!

The moral of the story is: don't worry if the recipes don't come out exactly like our pictures or you add too much dill to the chicken salad. You never know—you might just end up with an explosive new dish. Bian Pao, yo!



PHONE HINTS



TABLE HINTS



STYLE CLIPS SANITY TIPS





TONE HINTS

INVITATION

- You can buy individual Super Bubble pieces at party stores like Party City. They usually cost between a nickel and a dime. This way you don't have to purchase a huge amount.
- If you don't own an Olfa Blade, Cutting Matt and Metal Straight Edge, you don't know what you've been missing on the clean cut scene. You can get them all at an art supply store like Dick Blick or go through Amazon. Best practice (and many ruined edges) reminds us to position the straight edge within the boundaries of the invitation's guide lines and cut on the outside. This way if you slip, you slip away from the precious image.
- Glue dots are awesome. Trust us.
- Within Bob Villa's discipline of "measuring twice and cutting once," practice writing your details on scratch paper first. Paint pens can be unpredictable.

ENTRY PIECE

- Odds are you will not find a perfect little package of red, white and blue twist balloons. Instead grab a multi-color pack but remember they are randomly packaged. Inspect the packages first and choose one that has enough red, white and blue. Remember you need 6 – 7 of each color.
 - Don't get overwhelmed by this one. It's a whole lot easier than you think and super fun once you get twistin'.
 - Don't prep this piece until the morning of the fourth. Wilted and deflated balloons won't sell the Boom! Pow! Wow! Message.
-
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CENTERPIECE

- In terms of glue, we tested both hot glue and Elmer's. Both work, but Elmer's is easier to handle.
- Don't balk at the cost of this component. You would spend at least \$30 on flowers and those won't last.
- Just a thought: offer them as take-away favors for your guests!
- Visual balance is struck in odds. So whatever size your table happens to be you'll want to make three, five or seven of these suckers.
- This is the most time-intensive of the projects, so space it out and build with the company of some belovedly bad TV. (A little Bravo anyone?)

DO-A-OOMPH

- You can core the baby watermelon up to five days in advance (just to get some stuff out of the way).
- It's easier to light sparklers with a sparkler – so direct your guests to light one and use that as an ignition point.
- Be aware of your city's sparkler ordinances. There may be restrictions on sale and delivery which could require a trip to a nearby town or suburb. If this is the case you may need to plan accordingly, but get the chance to try a new restaurant en route.
- Do not use colored sparklers. They produce crazy amounts of smoke.





TABLE HINTS

Mince, Dice, Chop, Huh?



From left to right, above: large chop, medium chop, small chop (diced), and minced.

How do you know how big or small something is supposed to be? If the recipe writer feels it matters, usually they will also include a measurement, like 3/4" dice. Again, we see the word dice here to indicate that this is a very specific direction. But if the sizing has some leeway, they will say either large, medium or small chop. Unfortunately, these sizes aren't standardized so it's hard to give measurements.

Large chop

For us, when a recipe says large chop, I usually make it roughly the size of a nickel.

Medium Chop

Medium chop is about half the size of a nickel.

Diced (Small Chop)

Small chop is about half of medium chop, perhaps a quarter inch to a side.

Minced

Mince is very fine, as small as I can get it.





STYLE CLIPS SANITY TIPS

And now...to your closet to decide what to wear!!!!!!
You know you want to do it. We know you do too. So go on with your bad self and dress up in red, white and blue. But may we suggest a few ways to wax sartorial patriotic, outside the white jeans box? Whether edgy, classic or glam – we've got ideas for you.

As featured in the pictogram how-to shots we went with shimmering blue nails for this year's Fourth. It's simple and coordinates with all looks from edgy - classic. Base your nails with two coats of Esse's Arbua Blue and top with a thin top coat of Golden Nuggets.



EDGY

Remember edgy means on the edge - not over it. When you use a bold material like leather and pair it with a loudly textured shoe, like these amazing Nicholas Kirkwoods, something has to be plain. A silky cami works perfectly as a blank canvas and the star necklace is a witty homage to the day.



GLAM

If campers can be glampers and Valentino's making jumpsuits - then, YES you can glam up the fourth. Red silk jumpsuit + plunging neckline + chunky heels + stacked bracelets = Boom, Pow, Glam!



CASUAL

This look gets the patriotic point across with a few unexpected details. Don't feel like you can't use a non-traditional accent color or print. (Soirtay rules say that there's always room for animal print.)



Collage created using Polyvore.com ©



host with a **BANG!**

“Night and the day, when united,
Bring forth the beautiful light.”

- VICTOR HUGO, *Bug-Jargal*

Fourth of July really comes alive as day joins night. At dusk the fireflies begin to flutter and the anticipation of the fireworks display bubbles. Open your eyes and be present at that moment.

Although Bug-Jargal is a story from the Haitian Revolution and not our American war for independence, the overarching theme applies. It's about interracial friendship in the context of division. It's a reminder that we are at our human best when we are united, friendly and diverse. As your friends light their sparklers remember what a privilege it is to have such liberties: to gather, to love whomever we choose without prejudice and to pursue whatever it is that brings us joy. Those liberties are the truly beautiful light of our lives. That is what we—just like John Adams said—are “solemnizing with pomp and parade...bonfires and illuminations.”

