

# Simplify your summer

## soirée

*The Summer party season is on and we've got the tips to make it your best ever! The beauty of Summer entertaining goes well beyond a dress code of tank tops, shorts and shades. The size of your din-*

*ner table no longer limits your guest list and you can go super creative with party themes and entertain with pizzazz. The "party girls" at Stamford's Marcia Selden Catering and Event Planning have prepared*

*a few tips for you to simplify your summer get-together and make you the star of your party. You'll feel like the coolest hostess even when the temperature heats up!*

**S**elect your date, create the guest list and nail down the details early. Cliché or not, getting all of your ducks in a row, allows you to become a guest at your own party and enjoy the company of your friends.

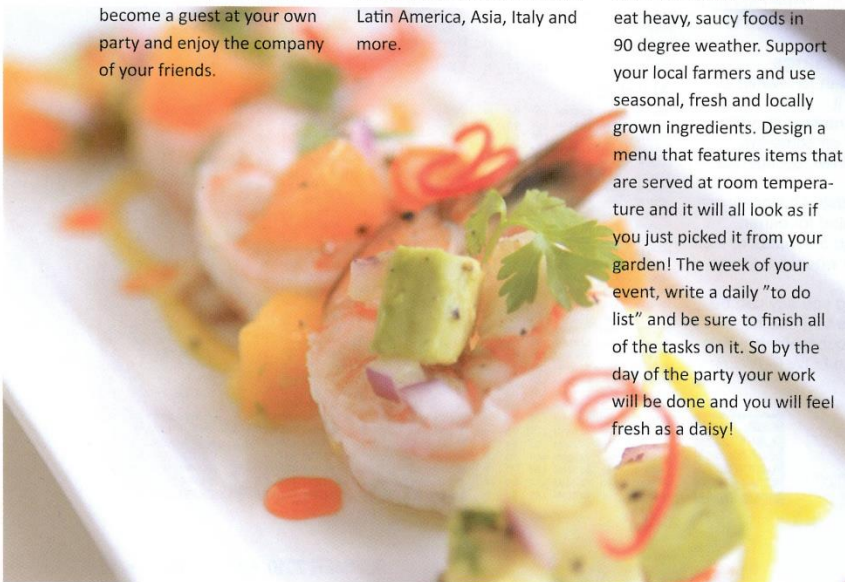
**I**nvolve the theme. Toss out your red and white checkered tablecloths. Think simple yet sassy, highlighting with lots of bright colors. Imagine Hawaii, Latin America, Asia, Italy and more.

**M**astermind your menu. Play off your theme and create a menu that is light and easy to prepare in advance. No one wants to eat heavy, saucy foods in 90 degree weather. Support your local farmers and use seasonal, fresh and locally grown ingredients. Design a menu that features items that are served at room temperature and it will all look as if you just picked it from your garden! The week of your event, write a daily "to do list" and be sure to finish all of the tasks on it. So by the day of the party your work will be done and you will feel fresh as a daisy!

**P**repare with a little panache! Try something that's not exactly classic, but a twist on the old favorite and all your "foodies" will love it!

How about giving a new look to the same ol' burger bar? You could try giving it an exotic or international flair. Ideas include Asian Tuna Burgers with Wasabi Mayonnaise, Greek Turkey Souvlaki Burgers with Tzatziki Sauce, Skirt Steak Burger with Barbecue Sauce, Sausage and Broccoli Rabe Burger with Arrabiatta Sauce or Lamb Burgers with Smoky Pineapple Salsa. The possibilities are endless.

Accompany your selections with great, innovative "sides"; salads, veggies and toppings.





## Peach Bellini

### Ingredients

15 1/4-ounce can peach halves in syrup  
750-ml bottle prosecco, chilled

### Directions

Reserve 1/4 cup of the syrup and drain peaches. In a blender combine the peaches with reserved syrup and pulse until smooth. Pour mixture into glasses and add Prosecco.

**L**ift your spirits. Cool off with fun Summer cocktails. Create a refreshing signature drink. Why not try a Wine Bar with 6 different selections for guests to sample. Find a theme and build around it. "Forget Napa, it's all about New Zealand" Wine Bar; a great "Boutique Beer Bar," or a bar with a variety of Martinis, Mojitos, Margaritas or Sangrias.

**I**ndulge the senses. The success of a party is as much about the food as it is about the atmosphere that you'll create. What better way to set the mood than a selection of the right sound mix. Download all of your favorite tunes or gather your favorite CD's, keeping your selected theme in mind. The right music selection will add "magic" to your event, but make sure that you have it all sorted out well in advance and you can join your guests on the dance floor.

**F**lowers can be good to complement your party space, but to spice it up you might want to try potted herbs, small plants, seashells and sand or fresh colorful produce such as purple grapes, pineapples, baby bananas, mangos, colored peppers. If you love and insist on flowers, think about making vases from hollowed vegetables or a variety of great looking clay pots and stuff them with an array of country bouquets. Decorate your table with linens in bright summer colors and motives to set the mood. Tie the guest napkins in ribbon or raffia with a fresh flower tucked in each one and you've got yourself a great décor that is sure to wow everyone.

**Y**es... you're almost done! All the party details are in order, the décor is spectacular, your food has been prepared and is ready to go. Everything looks great so here's the most important tip of all: relax, have fun, enjoy the company of your friends and reap the benefits of all of your hard work!

Bon Appétit!

