



STARS + STRIPES!

Get ready to *rock your block party* this *Fourth of July*! Gather friends into your *star-spangled backyard* for a day of *silly costumes*, *serious lip-syncing*, and barbecue favorites remixed with *surprising new flavors*. And while the kids are slurping *berry-topped floats* from our fruited plains and cookin' up *macaroni necklaces* that would make Yankee Doodle proud, you'll be kickin' back and *raising a glass* to Old Glory. Let the fireworks begin!

CRAFTS BY RUBYELLEN BRATCHER RECIPES BY ERICA CLARK
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SABRINA HELAS





party like it's 1776!

Whip up some big-impact decorations, crank the patriotic tunes, and watch the kids shine!

YANKEE DOODLE NECKLACES

The perfect macaroni flair.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Various pastas (we used rotelle, rigatoni, penne, farfallini, and cannelloni)
- Plastic baggies
- Food coloring (like India Tree Nature's Colors)
- Rubbing alcohol
- Parchment paper
- Yarn (or 2 to 3 premade pom-poms or tassels per child)
- Scissors (at least one pair for 2 to 3 kids)
- Shoelaces or paracord (for stringing necklaces)

1. Before the party, dye the uncooked pasta. Separate pasta into plastic baggies. Add a few drops of food coloring and two caps of alcohol to each. Close and shake until the pasta is coated. Place on parchment paper to dry.

2. At the party, set out dyed noodles, yarn, and shoelaces or paracord. Show the kids

how to make tassels and pom-poms (left), then let them loose!

TO MAKE POM-POMS: Wrap yarn around four fingers 50 times; cut the tail. Pull off the bundle; double-knot a new piece around the middle. Cut open the loops; trim to shape.

TO MAKE TASSELS: Wrap yarn around four fingers 20 times. Pull off the bundle and cut the tail; double-knot a new piece near the top. Wrap a third piece around the top six times and double-knot it. Cut open the long loops and trim.

SUPERSIZE STARS

Add instant WOW, anywhere!

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Box cutter (adults only)
- Cardboard boxes
- Tinsel garland (about 50 feet per 3-foot-wide star; we got ours from christmascentral.com)
- Glue gun and glue sticks (2 to 3 per star)

1. Cut a star out of cardboard.

2. Wrap the star horizontally with tinsel, adding glue as you go, from top to bottom.

→ host a lip-sync battle

Don't know the words to "This Land Is Your Land"? Fake it! No need to carry a tune to win this game.

MAKE THE FLAG

Transform scrap fabric (old sheets work, too) into an Old Glory-ous backdrop to use year after year. **What to do:** Tear 5 yards each of red and white fabric into 2-inch-wide strips (snip with scissors to start). Make each piece about 7 feet long, tying shorter pieces together, if necessary. Repeat using blue fabric, making 3-foot-long pieces. You'll need 50 to 60 strips of each color. Cut white pom-pom trim to six 3-foot lengths. Knot about 10 strips of red fabric onto one end of a 4-foot-long dowel, then 10 strips of white fabric. Repeat to make 13 stripes. Tie the blue fabric in front of the stripes to cover half of the left side the flag, then tie on pom-pom trim every 4 inches. Tie twine to each end of the dowel to hang.

HAND OVER THE MIC

...and let the kids lip-sync their way to stardom! **What to do:** Slice down the length of a paper towel tube, roll it into a cone, and tape it closed. Crumple tissue paper into a ball and insert it into the opening. Cover the ball with newspaper, attach it to the base with black tape, then continue to wrap the entire base. Coat the newspaper ball with glue, then roll in silver glitter. Let dry.

TROPHIES FOR ALL!

Everyone wins with lots of quirky prizes (top left). **What to do:** Stack two to three cups or cans (flip some upside down) in varying shapes; hot-glue in place. Hot-glue a plastic figure to the top; let dry. Spray each trophy with two to three light coats of metallic paint; let dry.



GIVE 'EM SOME PROPS! Throw sunglasses, hats, wigs, and more into a kid-friendly container decorated with foam star stickers.

create



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fill your plate!

Upgrade your classic American fare with these delicious dishes that are perfect for a crowd! Make the whole menu, or choose one to bring to a potluck.

FROM TOP LEFT:

1. Smokey Spud Salad
2. Peach Iced Tea
3. Tomato-Peach Salad
4. Triple-Berry Float
5. Sparkling Pastry Stars with Strawberry Whipped Cream
6. Finger-Lickin' Chicken Wings
7. Patriotic Whoopie Pies
8. Grilled Corn with Honey-Lime Butter



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 For recipes, see pages 34 and 94.



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RECIPES FROM PAGE 32

Smokey Spud Salad

Bacon and chives, oh my! This Dijon-based potato salad is loaded with flavor.

MAKES 10 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- 2½ lb. Yukon Gold potatoes
- Salt
- 4 slices thick-cut bacon
- ½ cup Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbs. white-wine vinegar
- 1 Tbs. minced fresh chives

1. Place scrubbed whole potatoes in a large pot and cover with cold, salted water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then

cook until tender, 15 to 18 minutes; drain and set aside.

2. Meanwhile, cook bacon in a large skillet over medium heat until crisp, about 9 minutes. Remove bacon to paper towels to drain; reserve the fat in the skillet.

3. In a small bowl, whisk 2 Tbs. reserved bacon fat (discard the rest), the Dijon mustard, and the vinegar until combined. (The dressing will taste very salty because of the bacon fat, but the flavor will balance once you add the potatoes!) When potatoes are cool enough to handle but still warm, cut them into bite-size chunks and place in a large bowl. Pour dressing over the warm potatoes and gently toss to coat. Sprinkle with minced chives and toss again. Crumble the cooked bacon over the top.

Food Styling by Marian Cooper Cairns. Prop Styling by Amy Lipnis. Wardrobe Styling by Heather Rome.

Peach Iced Tea

Say cheers to the red, white, and blue with a sweet summer sipper.

MAKES 10 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup sugar
- 7 cups water, divided
- 3 peaches, divided
- 4 decaffeinated black tea bags

1. Combine sugar, 1 cup of water, and two peaches (pitted and chopped) in a small pot. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the sugar is dissolved, about 6 minutes.

2. Remove mixture from heat and let sit 30 minutes. Then strain mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a large pitcher.

3. Bring 6 cups water to a boil; remove from heat. Steep tea bags in the hot water for 10 minutes.

4. Carefully pour tea into pitcher with the peach syrup and refrigerate until chilled.

5. Pit and thinly slice the remaining peach.

6. Serve on ice, garnished with peach slices.

Tomato-Peach Salad

In-season tomatoes and peaches make this salad irresistibly juicy and delicious.

MAKES 10 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- 2 large heirloom tomatoes, cut into wedges
- 2 peaches, pitted and sliced
- 2 oz. feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 Tbs. lemon juice
- Salt and pepper
- 1 head Bibb lettuce, torn into pieces

1. In a large bowl, combine tomatoes, peaches, feta, olive oil, and lemon juice.

2. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

3. Toss with lettuce leaves and serve.

Triple-Berry Float

We packed loads of berry flavor into this cool Fourth of July float.

MAKES 8 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 half-gallon container of strawberry ice cream
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup raspberries
- 1 quart raspberry ginger ale

1. Fill 8 large glasses with 2 scoops of ice cream each. Divide berries among glasses.

2. Top each off with ½ cup of ginger ale.

