Domaine Carneros Sparkling Wines for Thanksgiving

Russian River Valley Vintner Mike Sullivan

Dulinary Capers in Coorg

Discover Oman’s Alila Jabal Akhdar

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Creative Entertaining

A birthday celebration at the home of friends Michael Cooper and Krystal Knox; event design by Monabh Bulpin.

I grew up in a big Jordanian family in the suburban north of Sydney. Every night, my mother would clear away the housework, leave the sidlings, and I would pick up the kitchen table and serve up a gourmet Mediterranean feast, whipped up in minutes and perfectly presented.

Even as a schoolgirl, fresh herbs topped most dishes, and the scent of roasted pine nuts filled the air. On special occasions, she would lay out a hand-stitched tablecloth that was lovingly handcrafted, and add splashes of color with citrus, cherries, and pine nuts. She also showed me how to pick flowers, vegetables, and fresh herbs from the garden and helping out in the kitchen.

All of my aunts shared their talent for hospitality and taught me that one of the best things you can do for people is cook for them. The food they served was always fresh and delicious, and the presentation was always perfect. The chandelier was always lit, the music played, the drinks poured, and the place settings just right.

I learned from a young age that our heritage as Jordanians was to be welcoming and warm. No matter who the guest, everyone is greeted like royalty. I assumed that was how every family entertained. My mother’s ability to entertain in the kitchen and elegance at the table and my father’s welcoming manner rubbed off on me.

Now, as an adult, those weekly Sunday gatherings are a cherished memory of a bygone era. Our lives today are much busier. Most of us focus on the challenges of raising a family and the responsibilities that come with it. Our friends and family throw our way, the thought of whipping up a dinner party at home presents a daunting task. To say the least. Cooking dinner for 80 guests...are you mad? Whether it’s the hectic grind or associated with entertaining, getting the menu just right, meeting everybody’s dietary restrictions, or

choosing the right mix of company, the thought of entertaining can be daunting. But I’ve found that the secret to successful entertaining is to keep it simple and enjoyable. I’ve learned to embrace the small moments and find joy in the simplest pleasures. Whether it’s a simple gathering with friends or a more formal event, the key is to keep it simple, welcoming, and fun. And most importantly, to enjoy the process and the company of those around us.
But most of us have forgotten how much fun it truly can be. Creative entertaining will show you that entertaining at home doesn’t have to be expensive, time consuming, or difficult. Overnight, it can be socially satisfying and, yes, fun. Entertaining at home is more personal, more relaxed, and more intimate than hosting people at a restaurant. And you can personalize everything—from lighting to music to the menu—all to your liking.

Doing it right is the key. The plastic cups, styrofoam plates, paper plates and napkins are not an option unless you’re a college student hosting a dorm party. While I’m not a classically trained designer, events planner, or chef, I am an avid student of all these. I love strolling, mixing and matching, and checking out the latest fashions in design, decor, art, and the newest culinary trends. And, as in my wildling know-all manner, I will be the first to tell you if your entertaining is not up to snare. My philosophy is simple: if you’re not going to entertain well, don’t bother entertaining at all.

Spirits and Liqueurs
- Gin
- Tequila
- Vodka
- Dark Rum
- Light Rum
- Brandy
- Whiskey
- Scotch
- Amaretto
- Lemoncello
- Triple Sec
- Dry and Sweet Vermouth
- Orange and Lemon Bitters
- Coffee Liqueur

Mixers
- Lime Juice
- Lemon Juice
- Pineapple Juice
- Tomato Juice
- Orange Juice
- Cranberry Juice
- Grapefruit Juice
- Pomegranate Juice
- Celery
- Ginger Ale
- San Pellegrino

Nice To Have Around

- Mint
- Basil
- Rosemary
- Cilantro
- Ginger
- Fresh Fruit
- Colby
- Cheese
- Cocktail Olives
- Nutmeg
- Cilantro
- Salt
- Sugar
- Whipped Cream