

Stars & Stripes 4th of July



Let Freedom Ring! Fourth of July is American Independence Day and celebrates the spirit of Patriotism and Freedom. This festive summertime holiday is perfect for picnics and barbeques with family and friends. Freedom represents many things to many people but the freedom to celebrate with your favorite people, food, music and drinks is one of the best reasons of all!

You can use all or parts of the party box, or even mix and match from other party boxes, to create a spectacular 4th of July party in your own backyard!



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Invitations



Who's at the Party?

A summer party around the holidays will find many people invited to multiple parties, on vacation or trying to decide if they will have their own party. Create the energy of the party early and you will have more people looking forward to your party!

However you let people know about your party be sure your invitations include the following information:

1. Date
2. Time
3. Location
4. Dress Code – Patriotic Casual and Comfortable
5. RSVP by date (usually 1 week before the party)

Send your invites a month to three weeks before your event so people have plenty of time to respond. The ideal time for a 4th of July party is afternoon into early evening. This gives you enough time to relax with food, drinks and games before the fireworks!



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Menu

This Star Spangled menu is sure to stir patriotism in all of us as we celebrate our great country and the foods that we have come to love! We have created a menu that is easy to make yet interesting and flavorful, the decorations are simple but fun and you have a step by step plan on how to pull it all together with ease right here in the party plan.

Cocktails

Red, White and Blue Cocktails

Star Spangled Kiddie Cocktails

Ice Cold Beers

Appetizers

Mini Stuffed Sweet Peppers

Grilled Corn Dip with Tortilla Chips

Entrees

Dogs Across America “Haute” Dog Bar:

Kosher Beef Dogs, Chicken Dogs and Brats

Multitude of Hog Dog Toppings

Side Dishes

Tri Color Baked Beans

Patriotic Potato Salad

Dessert

Flag Flying Cupcakes





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Recipes

Cocktails

Red White and Blue Cocktails

Red – Simple Sangria



Ingredients:

- 1 Bottle of red wine - Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Rioja (Spanish red), Zinfandel, Shiraz
- 1 Lemon cut into wedges
- 1 Lime cut into wedges
- 1 Orange cut into wedges
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 oz brandy
- 2 Cups ginger ale

Directions:

Pour wine in the pitcher and squeeze the juice wedges from the lemon, lime and orange into the wine. Toss in the fruit wedges, minus the seeds, and add sugar and brandy. Chill overnight so the flavors will meld and intensify. Add ginger ale just before serving. Serve in a collins glass filled with ice. Garnish with citrus wheel.



White - Sage Lady Cooler



Ingredients:

1 1/2 parts Absolut Mango Vodka
2-3 fresh sage leaves
3 slices of cucumber
1 part simple syrup
1/2 part Cointreau
dash of peach bitters
Club Soda

Directions:

Muddle cucumber, simple syrup and sage in a cocktail shaker. Strain into a high ball glass filled with ice. Add Absolut Mango Vodka, Cointreau, peach bitters and top with club soda.

Blue - Blue Hawaiian



Ingredients:

2 oz pineapple juice
3/4 oz rum
3/4 oz blue Curacao
3/4 oz creme de coconut
Maraschino cherry for garnish
pineapple wedge for garnish



Directions:

Pour ingredients into a tall glass filled with ice cubes. Garnish with the cherry and pineapple.

Patriotic Cosmos**Ingredients:**

1/2 oz Cointreau
1 oz vodka
Splash cranberry, red or white
1/2 lime juice

Directions:

Pour all ingredients in mixing glass half filled with ice. Shake and strain. For a fun twist, use white cranberry juice for a separate batch and add a few drops of blue food coloring to another batch. When serving, your guest can choose from the red, white or blue cocktails.

Star Spangled Kiddie Cocktail**Directions:**

Before the 4th, freeze Cool Blue Gatorade or Kool-Aid Ice Blue Raspberry Lemonade and Red Hawaiian Fruit Punch in **star-shaped ice cube trays**. Just before serving, pour cold 7-up in individual clear glasses. Add a few of the star shaped ice cubes to each glass along with a festive straw. Yes, if you add the red stars and the blue stars to the same glass, when they melt, you will have purple. Not so bad.





Appetizers

Sweet Peppers Stuffed with Herb Cheese



Ingredients:

30 red, yellow, and/or orange mini sweet peppers (about 12 oz. total)
18 ounces semi-soft goat cheese (chevre)
1/4 cup snipped fresh chives, tarragon, basil, and thyme
Fresh basil leaves to garnish

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degree F.

Leaving the stem intact cut a small opening along the top of each pepper. Remove the seeds; set aside. In a small bowl, combine goat cheese and snipped herbs. Spoon cheese mixture into prepared pepper and wipe pepper clean of any filling. Arrange filled peppers close together so they will stand up straight or nestled in small uncooked beans on a baking sheet. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until cheese is heated through and peppers are crisp-tender.

Use tongs to arrange warm peppers on a serving dish, stacking peppers into a pyramid shape. Garnish with fresh basil leaves. Makes 30 servings.



Grilled Corn Dip

Recipe Courtesy of Taste of Home



Ingredients:

6 medium ears sweet corn, husks removed
1 large onion, chopped
1 jalapeno pepper, finely chopped
2 tablespoons butter
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup sour cream
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
1 can (2-1/4 ounces) sliced ripe olives, drained
2 tablespoons sliced green onions
Tortilla chips

Directions:

Grill corn, covered, over medium heat for 10-12 minutes or until tender, turning occasionally.

Cut corn from cobs. In a large skillet, sauté the onion and jalapeno in butter for 2-3 minutes until almost tender. Add corn and garlic; sauté 1-2 minutes longer or until vegetables are tender. Remove from the heat.

In a large bowl, combine the mayonnaise, sour cream and chili powder. Stir in cheese and corn mixture. Transfer to a greased 2-qt. baking dish.

Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 25-30 minutes or until bubbly and golden brown. Sprinkle with olives and green onions; serve with chips. Yield: 5 cups.





Entrees

Dogs Across America “Haute” Dog Bar



All across America you can find people who love their hot dogs. And everyone you ask will have a different way to dress their dog. But that is part of what we are celebrating on the 4th of July, the right to have it our own way. So take the tour across these United States and choose your dog style and dress it the way you love it!

Chicago Dog – as they say in Chicago, “drag it through the garden” with yellow mustard, sweet relish (neon green kind “piccalilli”), diced onion, sliced ripe tomatoes, serrano chili or jardinière and a sprinkling of celery salt. Top with dill pickle spear.

New York Dog – Spicy deli mustard and sauerkraut

New Orleans Dog – BBQ sauce, grilled onions and tomato slices

Southern Dog – sweet finely chopped, mayo-based slaw are popular in the South and can include the chili-slaw (coleslaw, mustard, raw onion, minced all-meat chili) and BBQ slaw (coleslaw, BBQ Sauce, raw onion and mustard).

Philly Dog – Served in a Hoagie bun with yellow mustard and meatless chili

Arizona Dog - Bacon-wrapped hot dogs are grilled, then nestled in steamed rolls and topped with pinto beans, chopped tomatoes, onions, mustard, mayo, and jalapeños.

LA Dog – Wrapped in bacon, topped with grilled onions, diced tomatoes, ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise. Top with grilled Poblano chile strips.

Texas Dog – Mustard, chili, cheddar cheese, crunched tortilla chips and sliced



jalapenos.

Independence Dog – Choose from any of the toppings, show your independence and make your own creation.



A Lazy Susan works great for the toppings so that they can be spun around and selected from to create each custom hot dog. Small bowls for each topping will work fine too. Since the hot dogs are small it is fun to try a different combination of toppings with each dog to discover your favorite one!

Toppings:

Grilled Onions
Raw Onions
Pickle Relish
Pickle Chips
Sliced Tomatoes
Roasted Poblano Chilies
Jalapeno Jack Cheese
Coleslaw

Roasted Red Bell Peppers
Applewood Smoked Bacon
Avocado slices or Guacamole
Spicy mustard and regular Mustard
Cheddar Cheese
Chili with or without meat
Sauerkraut
Jalapenos





Side Dishes

Tri Color Baked Beans



Ingredients:

6 strips of bacon, cut into 1/4 inch pieces
1 medium onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
2 15-ounce cans black beans
2 15-ounce cans pinto beans, drained
2 15-ounce cans red or kidney beans, drained
3 tablespoons molasses
1 cup ketchup
1 cup packed dark brown sugar
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
1/4 cup yellow mustard

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Fry bacon in a large skillet until crisp and remove from pan. Sauté the onions until they are translucent, over medium heat. Add garlic and bell peppers and cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in beans, molasses, ketchup, brown sugar, vinegar and mustard; bring to a boil.



Transfer to a 3-quart casserole dish. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until hot and bubbly. Refrigerate overnight and reheat when ready to serve.

Patriotic Potato Salad



Ingredients:

1 1/2 pounds unpeeled assorted fingerling potatoes or baby potatoes (such as white-skinned, red-skinned, and purple), cut crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices
8 ounces trimmed sugar snap peas
1 bunch radishes, trimmed, sliced
1/2 small red onion, small dice
1/4 cup olive oil
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
Zest of 1 lemon
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 garlic clove, pressed
1 tsp anchovy paste
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Steam potatoes on steamer rack set in large pot over boiling water until almost tender, about 10 minutes. Add sugar snap peas and steam until peas are crisp-tender and potatoes are just tender, 1 minute longer. Put snap peas in an ice water bath to keep the green color.

Whisk next 6 ingredients in small bowl to blend. Whisk in Parmesan. Season dressing with salt and generous amount of pepper.

Transfer potatoes to large bowl. Dress the potatoes while they are still warm. Add radishes, snap peas and onion.

Season with more salt and pepper, if desired. Serve warm or at room temperature.



Dessert

Flag Flying Cupcakes



These festive cupcakes will be the hit of your party! Kids and adults alike will get a kick out of the flag waving cupcake tops. What a tasty way to carry your theme through to the end of the party. You can use them for other patriotic holidays besides 4th of July too. To save time I use a box mix and then spend my time with the fun of decorating.

Cupcakes:

Use your favorite cake mix and make the cupcakes according to the box recipe. Cool cupcakes. You can make the cupcakes the day before and decorate them the next morning or the same day as you bake them.

The frosting color of the buttercream is slightly off white because of the butter but the taste of whipped buttery frosting makes it entirely worth it. Also, the frosting can be easily tinted with food paste gel or food coloring.

It's important to note that when preparing a batch of frosting that you adjust the consistency of the buttercream for what you plan on using it for. The easiest way to do this is by adjusting the amount of milk you use. The less milk you pour in, the stiffer your frosting will be. If you should pour in too much milk, you can always add more sifted powdered sugar to stiffen it back up. I prefer a medium, soft but slightly stiff consistency when spreading on a cake. But for piping and decorative work, I prefer a stiffer consistency so the piping is more distinct.

American Buttercream Frosting:

Ingredients:

3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (1 lb box) C & H Pure Cane Powdered Sugar, sifted
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk
1 tsp vanilla
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup butter ($\frac{2}{3}$ stick), room temperature



Directions:

Combine all ingredients in mixing bowl. Beat with electric mixer until smooth and creamy. Scrape the bowl often. Divide frosting into 3 bowls. One bowl each for white, red and blue colored frosting.

Use Wilton's food color and the **no-taste red** to get a pretty red color without the flavor change. Frost all cupcakes with the white frosting at one time. Next pipe 3 short stripes of blue in the upper left top side of cupcakes to create base for the stars. Then pipe red stripes on the rest of the cupcake like the flag. Finish with a small star tip for little stars on the blue base.

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Decorations

Creating the Mood

Colorful Tablescapes and More

Vinyl tablecloths are better than paper since moisture from glasses will ruin the tablecloth. You can pick up inexpensive ones at **Party City**. Set each table with a different color in red, white and blue or **patriotic themed** tablecloths.

Bunting hung from balconies, patio covers and doorways are a great splash of color and add to the festive mood. And there is something about swirling streamers hanging from

Centerpiece

In the center of each table place a small metal bucket (like a sand pail) and fill with sand. Stick American Flags, streamers and rockets in the sand at varying heights.



Lanterns and Lights



Lighting is a very important part of any party. There is something about twinkling, colorful lights that tells you this is going to be a special party. Use a few strands of your white Christmas lights and string lights under umbrella, patio covers and across the yard from tree to tree. Hang **paper lanterns** from tree branches and under the patio cover. Swirling streamers with **patriotic icons** are fun to hang every 6' along the string of lights.

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Music



The Land of the Free means we can all listen to our own favorites. Pick popular music for all age groups and intersperse the Patriotic tunes every 4th song. Target has a selection of Upbeat Festive music CDs to pick from. They are very reasonably priced and we have never been disappointed by their quality. Some Patriotic songs are listed below or you can always check iTunes. Sprinkle these tunes in between the other favorites. Start a playlist on Pandora you can revisit whenever you are in a patriotic mood!

1. **Star Spangled Banner - Charlie Daniels Band**
2. **America the Beautiful - Frank Sinatra**
3. God Bless The U.S.A. - Lee Greenwood
4. Stars and Stripes Forever - Nitty Gritty Dirt Band



5. Armed Forces Medley - United States Marine Band
6. Living In The Promise Land - Willie Nelson
7. This Land Is Your Land - Woody Guthrie
8. My Beautiful America - Charlie Daniels Band
9. God Bless America – Martina McBride
10. Battle Hymn of the Republic - Mormon Tabernacle Choir
11. America – Neil Diamond
12. Spirit of America – The Beach Boys
13. R.O.C.K. in the USA – John Mellencamp
14. Back In the USA – Chuck Berry



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Activities

Name the States

Download several [Maps of the United States](#). Outline the United States on white poster board and then cut out the states. Divide up into teams and have each team place as many of the states where they belong in 10 minutes. Whoever has the most states in the right places wins!

Lawn Games, Board Games and Fireworks

Lawn games such as volleyball, badminton, croquet and bocce ball are great fun. When it's time to get a little shade, Board games like Bingo, [Shut The Box](#), Clue, or Dominos will keep the fun going. If you can't get to a fireworks display or are happy to stay at your own party, then some sparklers, [bang pops](#) and [confetti poppers](#) will round out the day with a bang! Check your state for their [fireworks laws](#).



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Favors

Present your guests with their party favors the minute they walk through the door. Nothing gets a party off the ground faster than having something to wear that represents the fun that lies ahead! For a fun patriotic look all day long, give your guests **hats**, **tiaras**, **glowing star necklaces** and noisemakers so that each guest can have his or her own party accessory.



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Ready, Set, Go

The best way to have a stress free party and feel like a guest at your own party is to plan ahead. Here is a step by step party plan that will have you confident and excited about your own party. Remember, you are the Life of the Party and your guests will follow your lead.

One Month Before

1. Choose the date for your party. Our **Party Planner** will help you get all your ideas for the party together. Make your guest list and send out invitations and ask every person to think of a story about the best advice Dad ever gave them.
2. Decide what items you have on hand and what items you will need to purchase. Use our **Party Plan Menu** to help you plan. If they are custom items, order them now.
3. Consider the areas for the party and any touch ups that may be needed. Plants for outdoors, a little tidying up indoors.
4. Paint Patriotic flower pots and let dry completely.

One Week Before

1. Decide where you will hang the lanterns, string the lights and bunting. Make a list of



all accessories, serving pieces and tableware you will need. Special glassware or plastic glasses if your party is around the pool, for Red White and Blue cocktails of choice

2. Make sure your music sound system is in good working order and make your playlist/burn CDs and load the iPod.
3. Shop for any non-food type items.
4. Plant Patriotic flower pots.
5. Make the United States Map Game.
6. Decorate outside with all the Patriotic items.

1-2 Days Before

1. Shop for all food items (2 days before). Create a shopping list that will make it so much easier to plan and shop for your party. Our customized **Shopping List** will help you get organized.
2. Make hot dog toppings and place in containers with lids that you will use at Haute Dog Bar.
3. Make and freeze juice stars for "Kiddie Cocktails" and keep frozen until ready to use.
4. Chill beer and sodas.
5. Make Tri Color Beans and Grilled Corn Dip.
6. Make Flag Flying Cupcakes.
7. Decide on red White and Blue cocktails and premake each color and store in containers in the refrigerator. (especially Sangria) If making Patriotic Cosmos, then they can be premade the day of the party and stored in containers.

Day of the Party

1. Pick a time you must begin getting yourself ready and stick to it.
2. Stuff the peppers.
3. Set up the food area with the plates, utensils, napkins and glasses.
4. Make the Patriotic Potato Salad.
5. Set up the tables with tablecloths and centerpieces and place the signs around the



yard. Set up lawn or board game areas.

6. Review lists to make sure everything is ready.
7. Get dressed in your Red White and Blue party outfit.
8. Begin the festive music and have music playing the entire time.

Once Guests Arrive

1. Greet them with a welcoming cocktail.
2. Reheat the Grilled Corn Dip and Tri Color Beans. Bring out the appetizers.
3. Lawn or board games begin. Choose teams for the Map of the United States Game. Take pictures!
4. Fire up the Grill and set up for the Haute Dog Bar with the Menus for Dogs Across America.
5. Remember to mingle with your family and friends letting them know how much you appreciate them. Make sure Dad feels like the guest of honor.
6. Grill the dogs. Bring out the salads. Call your guests to the Haute Dog Bar and show them the "Menu".
7. Serve dessert.
8. Celebrate what makes America great, its people!

