





# Prepare the guest list: we're ready to (dinner) party.

To celebrate our latest Pop-In-full of cooking essentials, innovative appliances, photogenic serveware, cleanup tools and wellness faves-we asked chefs and experts for their tips, stories and go-to recipes to make hosting magic. (Spoiler: they were more than happy to share.) Read up and party on!



# **How to Throw Your Own Bennett Brunch**

skin, especially when they don't know other people."

Hedley & Bennett's Founder Shows Us How



Imagine a dinner party where you're not in charge of the cookingand your guests actually connect. Ellen Bennett's already solved it: they're called Bennett Brunches, and they're about to change how you host ... forever.

Bennett's the founder of L.A.'s Hedley & Bennett-creator of handcrafted aprons for chefs, painters, potters and other makers-who hit on the idea of brunch gatherings 2 1/2 years ago. The spark? A desire to make connections-and maximize her social time. "I'm up to my eyeballs every day, so if I have a Sunday morning off, I'm not just gonna see one person," she says. "I meet all these great people, chefs and entrepreneurs all over the world. What if I bring them together and

they get to meet other cool people?" Just don't confuse a Bennett Brunch with a typical daytime party: cooking together is crucial to getting relative strangers out of their shells. "I'm from the culinary world, so I've seen how food and kitchens make people be a lot more comfortable in their own

Friends becoming friends and a meal you didn't need to cook? We're on board. Bennett shows us how to

make the party magic happen.

## START THE THREAD

It all begins with a group email. "I explain, 'Guys, you're gonna be out of your comfort zone, it's gonna be so much fun.' The idea is to get people together in the same room," says Bennett. "Then in the email chain, there starts to be banter back and forth: 'I'm gonna bring my mom's favorite whatever'; 'I'm gonna bring flowers'; What about mimosas?' You're pre-developing the community before it even happens."

**DIVERSIFY THE GUEST LIST** Bennett Brunches are a chance to make connections and coordinate colliding worlds—think mixing school friends with professional contacts and neighbors. For Bennett, it's gathering people like Drybar founder Alli Webb, handbag designer Clare Vivier, Gramercy Tavern chef Michael Anthony and restaurateur Tim Hollingsworth, who had a 10-year tenure as the chef of French Laundry. "In normal life, these people would probably never run into each other. There's something really interesting about bringing them together and being like, 'Hey, let's hang out and cook and eat."

**GET 'EM IN UNIFORM** When guests walk through the door, Bennett gives them a hug and an apron to wear. "I legitimately think

there's something really important about the apron," she says. "It's like, 'You're in uniform now.' It really does make people feel like they're not just a bystander, but actually a part of it." And no, it's not just because she runs an apron company: "When I've left one or two people without aprons, they're not as involved as the ones with them."

## AND NOW, WE COOK

"I always suggest people bring ingredients for their favorite dish," says Bennett. "Then the load isn't all on you." For the kitchen averse, carve out some other assignments: "I'll go to the grocery store and buy bunches of flowers and have someone split them into Mason jars. Finding ways to help everyone collaborate is such a great icebreaker."

## TA-DA: COMMUNITY

"At an ordinary dinner party, there's one person serving you, or maybe there are waiters," says Bennett. "Bennett Brunches change the dynamic. You're no longer being served: you're serving each other, and you're creating a team. If you can create an environment where you're legitimately making a community, that's so much more powerful than inviting 20 people into a room to just consume food."

Want more inspiration? Search #bennetforunches on Instagram and follow @ellenmariebennett to see behind the scenes.

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"MY FIANCÉ AND I MET AT A PREARRANGED DINNER PARTY WITH NINE PEOPLE. IN CASE THERE WASN'T CHEMISTRY, IT WAS JUST A DINNER PARTY. I THINK THAT'S THE BEST WAY TO SET PEOPLE UP.

> - ELLEN BENNETT FOUNDER, HEDLEY & BENNETT LOS ANGELES, CA

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# Steak & Eggs with Moroccan Chermoula

from Gather & Graze

"Sometimes when I feel that I need some fresh inspiration, I'll say to all the cooks and servers, 'Pick a country!' Then I go on a big kick of learning all about the food there. One time Morocco got shouted out, which is how I came up with this chermoula sauce. It's salty and herbaceous, delicious on everything from pork to seafood to eggs, and even great as a marinade for steak. It also makes me think of green eggs and ham. (Okay, green eggs and steak, but close enough!) You could present this dish as a big platter of food with a serving fork or serve it with tortillas and invite your guests to make little breakfast tacos." -STEPHANIE IZARD CHEF & FOUNDER,

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GIRL & THE GOAT, LITTLE GOAT,

**DUCK DUCK GOAT** 

CHICAGO

### INGREDIENTS:

- · 1 bunch of cilantro, thick stems removed,
- leaves roughly chopped · 1 bunch of flat-leaf parsley, thick stems removed,
- leaves roughly chopped
- ½ cup brine-packed small capers
- ½ tablespoon cumin seeds 1 teaspoon black pepper, plus more for seasoning meat
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 3 tablespoons grated lemon zest
- 1½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil 1 pound skirt steak
- Kosher salt 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 8 large eggs

In a blender, combine the cilantro, parsley, capers, cumin seeds, black and cayenne pepper, lemon zest and juice, olive oil and 2 tablespoons water. Blend until smooth.

Preheat a grill or grill pan to medium-high heat.

Season the steak with salt and pepper. Grill for 3 to 4 minutes on both sides, until medium rare.

Heat the oil in a large, nonstick sauté pan over medium-high heat. Fry or scramble the eggs, seasoning them with salt and pepper

Slice the steak against the grain into thin strips. Top with the eggs, and drizzle with the sauce. Serve hot. SERVES 4

**Persian Rose** 

Rice Pudding

from High Vibrational Beauty

Recipe excerpted from High

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and Cindy DiPrima Morisse.

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**How to Make an Expert** 

Whether you confuse blue with brie or have an advanced cheese degree, Erika Kubick, founder of the blog Cheese Sex Death (@cheesesexdeath) and Digital Editor of cheese magazine Culture, is here to

PLATE #2:

dark chocolate

Sliced baguette

### PLATE #1:

**CHEESE CURIOUS** For cheese newbies, you'll want to keep things approachable but with enough variety so that each bite is still an adventure. Fresh goats, mild bries, cheddars and goudas are familiar territory and are generally crowd-pleasing. They're also easy to pair with cheese plate mainstays like apples and honey.

- Fresh goat cheese · Fromager d'Affinois brie · Prairie Breeze Cheddar from
- Milton Creamery
- Aged Beemster Gouda Sliced baguette, local honey, roasted almonds,

apple slices

**CHEESE ENTHUSIAST** Experienced cheese lovers are prepared to get a little more

focus on the best of the best. Leaf-wrapped goat cheeses are an adventurous. Soft-ripened goat cheeses, like Humboldt Fog, excellent way to showcase terroir. Bark-wrapped Harbison has a are both beautiful and exciting, similar effect, with a dramatically especially when paired with paper-thin prosciutto. Don't be oozing texture that will seduce afraid to cut open a stinkier snobs of all levels. French classics like summer-milk Comté and a cheese like Red Hawk or Taleggio-this crowd can take it! quality Roquefort will keep their Round out the platter with a palates tingling for days too. Pro tip: a swipe of softened butter firm, sliceable cheese paired with nuts and a mellow blue coupled will amplify the flavors in the with chocolate. cheese, so serve a bit on the side

- Humboldt Fog from Cypress of the platter. . O'Banon from Capriole Grove with prosciutto Red Hawk from Cowgirl Goat Cheese with a
- glass of bourbon and Creamery with fig jam Ossau-Iraty with toasted almonds Harbison from Jasper Hill Marcona almonds
- Farm with whole-grain Chiriboga Blue/Blue d'Auvergne paired with
  - baby pickles Roquefort with Vermont Creamery's cultured butter

Summer Milk Comté with

and sea salt Sliced baguette

PLATE #3:

CHEESE OBSESSED

If you're plating to impress,





# The Party Playlist

We tapped Seattle's music-minded foodie Melissa Miranda-chef and owner of Musang Seattle, a Filipino pop-up restaurant-for her go-to dinner party songs, a mix of mellow and dancy. "I love instrumentals and like when people at parties can bob their heads but also have a conversation," Melissa says. "It's a precursor to the dance party that will for sure happen after dinner."

- "Love and Happiness" -Al Green
- "Manila" Maribou State
- "É Isso Aí" -Sango feat. Carlos
- "Zionsville" -Khruangbin
- . "Can't Do Without You" -Caribou "Honey Dove" -Lee Fields & The Expressions
- "Come Closer" -Freddie Cruger & Anthony Mills Are Wildcookie
- "Chamakay" -Blood Orange
- "Wednesday Night Interlude" -Drake feat, PARTYNEXTDOOR
- "Jungle" -Drake
- "River" -Ibeyi
- "Love Song 1" -The Internet
- "Someone That Loves You" -HONNE & Izzy Bizu
- "Sleep Sound" -Jamie xx
- "Color Her Sunshine" –Ta-ku

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"THE SIMPLEST WAY TO ADD GREENERY TO A PARTY IS BY USING BIG LUSH CUT LEAVES IN A SIMPLE VESSEL. BISMARCKIA LEAVES ARE ONE OF MY FAVES. STRELITZIA OR MONSTERA ARE ALSO GREAT CHOICES. IF YOU WANT TO GET A BIT MORE CREATIVE, YOU CAN PLAY WITH DIFFERENT FOLIAGE TEXTURES TO MAKE SOMETHING UNIQUE. WE LOVE USING LOTS OF DIFFERENT FOLIAGE TOGETHER. I REALLY LOVE USING COLORFUL LEAVES LIKE REX BEGONIA AS THE MAIN PLAYER FOR AN ARRANGEMENT. I TREAT THEM LIKE THEY'RE THE FLOWERS."

> - BRITT WAINWRIGHT COFOUNDER, FOLIOSA VANCOUVER, BC





Kerrilynn Pamer is an expert at staying centered. She's cofounder of New York and L.A.'s wellness destination CAP Beauty and co-author of the ritual-and-recipe book High Vibrational Beauty with Cindy DiPrima

Morisse. She's also hosted many a party-including "debaucherous" Christmas bashes that milight've resulted in a marriage or two. We sought her wisdom on both areas of expertise in hopes she could make balanced hosts out of us all.

# HOW DO YOU PREPARE TO THROW A PARTY?

The prep part is so fun. I like to be really organized so I'm not doing things at the last minute, because I find that part to be super stressful. Things like sauerkraut, you can do a week before and have ready to go. I'm of the approach of getting it all organized and together preparty, and doing as much behind the scenes as you can.

LET'S SAY YOU'RE HAVING A PARTY BUT EVERYTHING'S GOING WRONG, WHAT PERSPECTIVE DO YOU KEEP TO STAY CALM?

Put it in perspective and recognize you're doing this because you want to have loved ones over. Realize that if something goes wrong, you're in forgiving company.

Worst-case scenario: you're ordering in. You're not on show, and you're not at an audition-you're really just trying to make things for people that mean a lot to you.

## HOW DO YOU CREATE AMBIANCE?

I always do incense, I'm really into copal, but that can be kind of heady and strong, so I typically burn that outside and leave the door open. I love to have flowers; plants are really nice to have out as well. Candles are also important to me. Bring the lights down, make sure the music is appropriate and create a truly cozy environment for everyone. You want people to walk in and feel like it's been thought through.

ANY TIPS FOR TAKING THE PRESSURE OFF YOURSELF AS A HOST?

I like to make dessert a more interactive experience. Pull out your favorite dishes and fill them with nuts and dried fruit. Create an experience where people get to participate more than a formal dessert round. You could do a big slab of chocolate and have a knife so people can cut a piece off. You could have really beautiful dried figs, persimmons and mango, and have it be more participatory. Taking that formal edge out is always a welcome change.

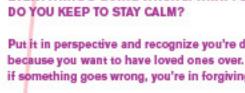
## HOW DO YOU GET GUESTS TO CONNECT?

Tlove asking people, "What's your inner age?" It's really insightful; it's asking somebody what they identify with at their core. It's kind of a flippant question but also dives into and cracks open who that person is. Some people will say they're 90, some people will say they're 5, some people will say they're 16. It's this very fast way to find out how somebody perceives themselves.

# LAST WORD

"WHEN I LIVED IN ITALY, MOST OF MY FRIENDS WERE ARTISTS AND DJS, AND A HANDFUL OF US WERE COOKS. WHEN WE'D FINISH LATE NIGHTS OUT DANCING AND LISTENING TO OUR FRIENDS PLAY, WE'D COME HOME AND MAKE PASTA—SUPER SIMPLE, SPAGHETTI WITH GARLIC AND RED PEPPER FLAKES. IT WOULD BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SCENE, EVERYONE SO HAPPY FROM THE NIGHT, WORKING TOGETHER AND COOKING SO WE COULD EAT TOGETHER. SOMEONE WOULD BE PLAYING MUSIC WHILE WE'D DANCE AND EAT."

CHEF & OWNER, MUSANG SEATTLE SEATTLE, WA





-MELISSA MIRANDA



amazing. It's really easy to make, and it's from High Vibrational dense food hangover the next

The highest vibrational plant we know, rose infuses this classic comfort food, lending a Persian twist and a fragrant perfumed profile. A magical dessert for a

### INGREDIENTS: 1 cup brown rice

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1 15-ounce can full-fat coconut milk

2 tablespoons filtered water, plus more as needed

2 tablespoons dried edible organic rose petals, crushed

"CRISP WHITES AND ROSÉS ARE THE BEST IN

THE SUMMER MONTHS. IF YOU'RE A CHARDONNAY

LOVER LIKE ME, CHABLIS IS CRISP, REFRESHING

AND ZIPPY, IT'S CHARDONNAY IN SWIMSUIT-BODY-

READY FORM: LEAN AND LITHE."

- JUNE RODIL

& MASTER SOMMELIER

VP OF OPERATIONS, MCGUIRE MOORMAN HOSPITALITY

- Seeds of 6 cardamom pods, crushed ½ teaspoon vanilla extract (or ¼ vanilla bean)
- 2 tablespoons honey or coconut nectar ¼ teaspoon Himalayan pink salt
- Pistachios Rose petals

In a medium saucepan, combine all ingredients and cook over medium-low heat until the liquid has been absorbed and the rice has cooked through. Add more water, if necessary. Allow to cool and transfer to the refrigerator to chill. When ready to serve, divide between four bowls and top with the pistachios and rose petals. SERVES 4



Beauty, our abundant collection of delicious recipes. They're all really healthy, so your guests will leave feeling good-they won't have that day, but they're still going to leave feeling sated and happy." -KERRILYNN PAMER COFOUNDER, CAP BEAUTY LOS ANGELES & NEW YORK CITY

night under the stars.