

# Saucepans and the Single Girl

By JINX KRAGEN and JUDY PERRY

**H**oping to avoid dry parties—at someone else's party. In our mind, the people who serve cocktail parties must be driven by a dark, but sane, urge. But if you're determined to go through with it, may we suggest that the one ingredient for a smashing party—in addition to an abundance of fine water—is your cocktail. Try to include a range of tastes and interests as you mix. The main thing is to keep people happy.

We try to get our guests circulating by being at the door to greet each and every one. People arriving at a party usually feel nervous and unprotected, so it's up to you to take the situation in hand and introduce your new ones. They should keep you party from being just another round of free drink.

The party itself can be as simple or as elaborate as you choose. It is important to be perfectly clear in your invitations about what your guests should expect. Cocktail parties often have a disarming way of becoming the Late, Late Show—only the host keeps her wit about her.

If you are planning a 5-to-7 affair with only drinks and a few peanut-butter and seaweed appetizers, don't send invitations that read "cocktail buffet" or your guests will come prepared to dive into a grooming board, and those wee canapés will be a dismal disappointment. Of course, if you are planning a cocktail buffet, be sure to make that clear also—so that your guests won't make other plans for dinner, leaving you with six pounds of lasagna.

Now comes the central concern of the cocktail party—liquor—and how not to be caught short. This subject is disheartening because, as we all know, liquor is expensive and can evaporate at a party. A good rule, if you are serving mixed drinks, is to buy enough liquor for three drinks per person. This means that one fifth will take care of almost five guests. When you've calculated your total, buy another fifth for insurance—of each type of liquor.

A better idea is to serve a bowl of punch, which is less expensive than mixed drinks and can be just as gay.

## ONE HOUR PUNCH

This one is traditional and, like most traditions, it got that way because it's so good.

1 qt. brandy 1 1/2 cups light  
1 qt. peach brandy corn syrup  
1 pint rum (dark) 2 qt. plain  
(6-oz.) cans sparkling water  
1/2 cup lemon  
juice

Mix all the ingredients except sparkling water well ahead of time and let them blend for about an hour. Taste with one cup of corn syrup—if you want it sweeter, add 1/2 cup. Just before your guests are expected, pour the mixture over a block of ice or ice cubes in your punch bowl (or dishpan). Add the sparkling water just before serving. This makes three cups apiece for a party of eight people. If you are having more, increase the recipe.

You must provide your friends with some kind of solid food to cut the effect of your liquid refreshments and keep them from biting their fingernails. The following hors d'oeuvres are easy to make and yet show enough ingenuity to make those who serve sour-cream-and-onion-soup dip at their parties hang their heads in shame.

## DIPO'S CHEESE DELIGHTS

1/2 cup softened butter or margarine  
2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese  
1/2 tsp. Worcestershire  
Dash liquid hot-pepper seasoning  
1 cup sifted flour

Toss everything but the flour into a bowl and stir it all up. Now blend in the flour and squish it around with your hands. Form into a long, smooth roll (about the size of the tubes inside paper towels). Here's the beauty: You can either

slice them about 1/4 inch thick and bake them now at 350° F. for 12-15 minutes, or freeze them as is and bake whenever needed.

## CLAM BLOBS

1 (3-oz.) pkg. cream cheese  
1 (7-oz.) can minced clams, drained  
Dash Worcestershire  
1/2 tsp. curry powder  
1 tsp. onion salt  
1/4 tsp. garlic powder  
Commercial toast rounds

Mix everything together but the toast rounds and refrigerate if you wish. Pile mixture on toast and stick under broiler for 3-5 minutes. Sprinkle with paprika and serve. Better triple this recipe. Serves 10 to 12.

## MARINATED MUSHROOMS

1/2 cup wine vinegar  
1/2 cup olive oil (or salad oil)  
1 tbsp. chopped parsley  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/2 tsp. pepper  
1/2 tsp. sugar  
1 tbsp. lemon juice  
1 clove garlic  
2 lbs. small fresh mushrooms, washed

Combine vinegar, oil, parsley, salt, pepper, sugar and lemon juice in a huge old Mason jar or anything that has a cover. Add garlic clove (still intact) and mushrooms. Cover and marinate several days or hours in the refrigerator. Remove garlic and serve. Serves 12.

## VEGETABLE CUT-UPS

In these days, when everyone is thinking thin, your guests might appreciate a platter of garden vegetables instead of a calorie-laden selection of goodies. Try a pretty plate of radish roses, cauliflower flowerets, green-pepper strips and carrot curls surrounding a bowl of sour cream flavored with curry, garlic powder, black pepper and dried herbs, for dunking purposes.

If you have noticed a reluctance on our part to include those old party standbys—dips—it is because they are messy and usually inordinately tasteless. But there is one that stands bright and shining above all others.

## GUACAMOLE

2-3 avocados, mashed  
Salt and pepper  
1 large hot green chili, diced (chilies come in 4-oz. cans)  
Onion salt  
Garlic salt  
Chopped pimiento  
Liquid hot-pepper seasoning

Mix all ingredients but liquid hot-pepper seasoning. Then start tasting. Add liquid hot-pepper seasoning a drop at a time and let stand at least 10 minutes between additions, so the flavor will have a chance to mingle. You'll know you have enough hot-pepper seasoning when you begin to have a ringing sensation in your ears. If the Guacamole is to stand for a while, add the juice of one lemon, cover and refrigerate. Makes about two cups, depending on the size of your avocados.

There you have it. Choose several hors d'oeuvres, but don't try to make too many or you may end up spending your party with your head under the broiler. Two cold and one hot would be quite sufficient for a small party of eight to 10 people.

## BIG BASHES

You'll discover that good things don't always come in small packages. A bash is by far the easiest way in the world to entertain and in some ways can be the cheapest. We're not trying to tell you that 12 people consume less food and

alcohol than two do—it's just that they will consume cheaper food and cheaper alcohol more cheerfully. With bashes, the bigger the better.

We suggest that you take a look at our checklist and put it up at least a week ahead of your bash:

1. Tack up your menu and stare at it long and hard. Do you have the right dishes with which to serve your repast? What kind of wine to serve, if any?
2. Gather your recipes together and check to make sure you have all ingredients and all the right kinds of pans for cooking.
3. What kind of canapés? If they have to be broiled, will that interfere with what's heating in the oven for dinner?
4. Are you going to serve only one kind of liquor, or actually have cocktails? How's your liquor supply? Do you have olives? Soda and mix, etc.?
5. If you're serving buffet style (is there any other way?), plan a road map of the buffet table, deciding which dish goes where. Go through the motions beforehand if you're not sure.
6. What about a centerpiece? If it's to be fruit or vegetables, put them on your grocery list.
7. Have you enough silverware? Need to borrow some?
8. Cigarettes and matches around? Plenty of ashtrays?
9. Lots of ice? Know of a ready source if you should run out?
10. Some kind of music?
11. Bathroom clean with fresh bar of soap?
12. Coasters and napkins?
13. Check your menu again.

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